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ABSTRACT

This final report describes the outcome of a program designed to affect the quality of early childhood special education services in participating states though the replication and dissemination of a validated Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development. The Model for Program Development (MPD) was designed to enable early childhood programs to establish new services or to improve existing services for young children (ages 3-5) with disabilities and their families. MPD utilized processes and designed activities that promote family, multi-agency and community involvement; are culturally, linguistically and ethnically sensitive; address the unique needs of the community; facilitate program planning and development; and promote the implementation of best practices. Project activities included: (1) conducting Leadership Training Institutes for participating states that focused on the MPD and best practices in the delivery of early childhood special education services; (2) providing on-site technical assistance consistent with comprehensive state plans of action developed by a state planning team from each participating state; and (3) disseminating and delivering best practice information, support, and modules for self assessment and program development. Appendices include a goal attainment scale, constituent group impact of activities, and state summaries. (Contains 16 resources.) (CR)

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EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OUTREACH PROJECTS

National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development

The Model Program Development (MPD) Outreach Project

FINAL REPORT
October, 1998

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FINAL REPORT

EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OUTREACH PROJECTS

NATIONAL REPLICATION OF A MODEL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

This is the final report for the National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development project (H024D40030) which was implemented from 1994-1997. The purpose of the Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD) National Outreach Project was to positively impact the quality of Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services in participating states through the replication and dissemination of a validated **Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development**. The Model for Program Development (MPD) was designed to enable ECSE programs to establish new, or to improve existing, services for young children three through five years of age with disabilities and their families. The goals of the project were to: 1) promote the implementation of best practice for the delivery of ECSE services in participating states, 2) support dissemination, training, and technical assistance activities within participating states that promote the implementation of best practice, 3) impact higher education personnel preparation programs, and 4) impact state and local policies and practices related to the provision of ECSE services. MPD utilized processes and designed activities that: promote family, multi-agency and community involvement; are culturally, linguistically and ethnically sensitive; address the unique needs of the community; facilitate program planning and development in a timely and systematic manner; and promote the implementation of best practices. Project activities included: 1) conducting Leadership Training Institutes for participating states focusing on the Model for Program Development and best practices in the delivery of early childhood special education services, 2) providing on-site technical assistance that is consistent with comprehensive state Plan of Action developed by a State Planning Team from each participating state, and 3) the dissemination and delivery of best practice information, support and Modules for self assessment and program development.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Background

Both the passage of PL 99-457 and our emerging knowledge of best practice as it relates to the design and implementation of ECSE services, have prompted significant and rapid growth in the field of early intervention. Legislation and research on program efficacy shifted the focus of early childhood special education from remediation of developmental deficits by individual staff within specialized settings to models which emphasize the facilitation of developmental competencies using a context that is inclusive, community-based, family directed, and culturally sensitive (Bruder, 1993). It is now considered best practice for all interventions to occur within a child's natural environment throughout typical routines and activities (Bruder, 1993; Bricker & Cripe, 1992; Rainforth & Salisbury, 1988). As a result, state policy makers, program directors, and ECSE service providers face a number of significant challenges as they attempt to design and implement services for young children with disabilities and their families. These challenges demand that early childhood special educators, program directors, and state policy makers establish a systematic plan for increasing the availability of appropriate early childhood special education services within the context of other services and systems that are available to or impact the lives of young children and their families. This plan must be based upon knowledge of best practices and be implemented in a way that is reflective of the complexities inherent in systems change efforts.

The National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development Project enabled participating states to identify and address challenges related to the provision of quality early childhood special education services by assisting them to replicate a **Model for Program Development (MPD).** The MPD model incorporates the critical aspects of system change (identified in Table 1) and addresses the challenges currently facing ECSE service delivery systems identified previously. The MPD model was developed and field-tested in Vermont from October 1987 to September 1990 through an HCEEP-funded model demonstration project within ten early childhood settings providing ECSE services. Applications of the model in Vermont resulted in clearly improved services for young children with disabilities, including those with severe disabilities, and their families (Flynn, Fox & Capone, 1990).

TABLE 1

CRITICAL ASPECTS OF SYSTEM CHANGE

The Total Quality Approach to Service (Foster, Whittle & Smith, 1989)

Careful attention must be paid to:

1. Increasing the system's capability and capacity to maintain high levels of service quality by creating a service-delivery system capable of continued improvement,
2. Defining service standards where they do not exist,
3. Dealing with problems in a more systematic manner through the use of diagnostic/analytic techniques, and;
4. Creating work groups to implement service goals on a continuous basis.

Customer Service Research (Deming, 1960)

Individuals involved in a system change process must:

- Create constancy of purpose,
- Adopt a new philosophy,
- Improve constantly and forever the system,
- Institute training on the job,
- Break down barriers between departments/agencies,
- Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement,
- Institute leadership, and
- Enable everyone involved to accomplish the transformation.

2. The MPD Process

MPD is a six-step process. Table 2 provides the framework and content of the Model.

TABLE 2

THE MODEL FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT/IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The Model for Program Development/Improvement provides a **process** for local school districts to establish new or improve existing services for young children with disabilities and their families. The process includes six steps:

1. **Creation and Operation of a Planning Team** that is representative of families of young children with disabilities, schools, agency and private providers and other community members.
2. **Crafting of a Written Philosophy Statement** that outlines the overall mission, goals and general values and beliefs of the program.
3. **Assessment and Analysis of Current Program Practices** to compare current practices that are being implemented with identified best practices.
4. **Creation of a Long-Term Program Development Plan** that identifies and prioritizes areas for program development and improvement.
5. **Creation of a One-Year Program Plan** that delineates objectives, activities, and time lines for addressing prioritized areas for program development.
6. **Implementation and Evaluation** of the One-Year Plan.

This model has enabled project staff to work with participating ECSE programs in a manner that is consistent with the critical aspects of system change identified by Foster, Whittle & Smith (1989) and Deming (1960), and results in improved services for young children with disabilities and their families. Specifically, Outreach project staff: 1) provided on-site technical assistance to state level interagency teams, 2) conducted leadership workshops specifically focusing upon "best practices" in interagency collaboration and early childhood special education, and 3) provided materials to assist specific programs to conduct self-assessments and develop plans of action for program development and/or improvement. Through these activities, participating state teams developed written vision or philosophy statements and program goals, developed action plans that were unique and appropriate to their context, and implemented actions to address their goals for program improvement.

3. How the Project Proposed to Address the Identified Problem

By design, the National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development project proposed project staff would work with individual participating states to:

a) Establish a **Partnership with a State Planning Team** representative of: state early childhood agencies, early childhood and early childhood special education community service providers, parent organizations, State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA, Services for Infants and Toddlers (ICC), higher education, other key players as identified by individual states, and the State 619 Coordinator;

b) Conduct a grant supported **Leadership Training Institute** for each participating state to provide **training related to the Model for Program Development** including **Best Practice Indicators for Early Childhood Special Education Programs** and to assist State Planning Teams to collaboratively develop a comprehensive **State Plan of Action** for the dissemination and implementation of best practices;

c) Provide State Planning Teams with **Best Practice Modules** (including in-service training goals, overheads, materials, and activities) related to selected best practice component areas (e.g., family-centered services, child-find, assessment, curriculum, Individualized Education Program (IEP), transition, and program evaluation), and

d) Provide on-site and long distance **Technical Assistance** to each of the State Planning Teams as they develop and implement their Plan of Action.

The following two sections present project findings and individual state accomplishments relative to these actions.

4. Overview of Project Findings

The evaluation of project activities sheds light on the complexity of implementing systems change. As state teams began to deal with issues related to the improvement of services for young children with disabilities and their families, it was immediately evident how intertwined service delivery systems, philosophy, preparedness of practitioners, individual program practices, and state policy and practice are with efforts focusing on system improvement. While each state can boast tremendous accomplishment, each team approached the issue of program development/improvement in a different way.

Arizona's activities focused directly at the program level. The state team, which had already existed prior to this Project, decided to use project resources to support the development of a process for parent-professional partnership in program design and delivery. During Year One, the state team worked to define The Village Project, assisted by project staff with collaborative group meeting facilitation, problem solving, action planning, dissemination of resources and training in areas of "Best Practice." During

Year Two, project resources enabled Arizona's team to field-test and evaluate the project in two school districts. Finally, in Year Three, The Village Project was disseminated statewide.

Unlike Arizona's program level focus, Vermont took a broader statewide system change approach. Based on the belief that services for young children with disabilities and their families are integrally related to the quality and availability of statewide services for all young children, this team used project resources to support efforts to enhance their vision of a statewide unified system of early childhood services. Through their existing interagency group, The Early Childhood Workgroup, they developed a Statewide Early Childhood 3 Year Agreement among state agencies and programs addressing operational standards for agencies and programs serving young children and their families. The standards described collaborative efforts to enhance resource integration, family centered service, training and professional development opportunities, continuous learning and improvement and public awareness. The service agreement was then replicated in pilot communities among local agency representatives and service providers to enhance the vision of a unified system of services.

New Hampshire focused on building a collaborative interagency team relationships within their changing service system context. They used project resources to identify critical team membership, facilitate team meetings, craft a vision statement which could guide their future efforts, and develop strategies for sharing their vision and collective resources with families, other programs and agencies. The New Hampshire team decided to infuse their vision and their knowledge of best practices into existing initiatives to improve programs for all the state's children and families.

particularly focusing on child-care and early childhood special education services. They used project support to provide technical assistance in Web page construction and for leadership training activities in conjunction with other state teams. New Hampshire's team also worked with project staff to design and deliver workshops disseminating "best practice" to in-place professionals, family members, and state advocacy groups as part of their state team action plan. They intend to use the momentum created through the state team to support new state initiatives that require collaborative involvement of agencies and programs serving young children and families in New Hampshire.

Georgia focused on statewide training needs related to the improvement of services. Their approach differed from that adopted in New Hampshire. In contrast to New Hampshire's direct dissemination of best practice information through workshops, Georgia established an Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium which worked with the State 619 Coordinator and project staff to review, refine, and revise the statewide technical assistance network for early childhood special educators.

In short, although the Model Program National Outreach Project proposed a fairly linear approach to program development and/or improvement, the work of participating states taught us about the multitude of approaches, issues, barriers, and facilitators to system change.

C. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Action #1: *State Planning Team:* *Each state will organize a State Planning Team including the State 619 Coordinator and representatives from state early childhood agencies, parent organizations, higher education, the State Interagency Coordinating Council for Birth to Three, and early childhood* *special educators providing direct service to young children with disabilities and their families. Once membership has been defined, the State Planning Teams will convene and complete the Pre-Institute Planning Tool.*

***Summary of Accomplishments*:** Each state worked to establish a representative statewide team. In some states this actually led to the development of a new team. In others this was accomplished by expanding the focus of a well-established State Level Team and adding appropriate membership. When gathering together a State Level Team, whose membership consists of representatives from various state agencies and parent and advocacy organizations, teams became acutely aware of the fact that diversity in team membership brought the strength of multiple perspectives. Similarly, they learned the challenge of working with multiple systems, each with its own set of policies, practices, and funding streams. Team members became aware of the need for training in collaborative processes and leadership, and the need to attend to issues of process as well as content in an on-going way. All state teams demonstrated a commitment to project goals and activities; however, each was challenged by issues related to the membership, consistency of membership, and team leadership.

The following factors appeared to challenge the effectiveness of teams relative to project goals:

Role of 619 Coordinators: Since state 619 Coordinators are legally responsible for coordinating the activities outlined in the state's 619 grant application, it was assumed that they would play a leadership role in facilitating the successful accomplishment of project activities. Project staff also anticipated that the 619 Coordinator's input would focus the team's attention on issues unique to the provision of services to young children with disabilities and their families. In fact, this proved to be the case in Arizona. The 619 Coordinator assumed a leadership role, established a team, presented the project, and facilitated a discussion focused on creating a match between project goals, objectives, and resources and Arizona's agenda for statewide service delivery improvement efforts. As a result, the Arizona team developed a plan of action that focused specifically in parent-professional partnerships in the design and delivery of early childhood special education services.

Vermont on the other hand identified an existing statewide Early Childhood Workgroup Steering Committee as the State Planning Team. The work of this group was guided by a commitment to establish a unified, statewide system of services for young children and their families. While their efforts were clearly related to the improvement of services for young children with disabilities and their families, their actions were much more diverse. Vermont used project resources to address state-level system change issues such as the establishment of a statewide interagency agreement. The work of the group was supported by project staff and members of the committee that were most directly involved in a specific action plan. The 619 coordinator played a nominal role in setting direction or facilitating the accomplishment of project goals.

In the state of New Hampshire, the coordinator of the state Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN) assumed a leadership role. She quickly became aware of commonalties between PTAN's mission and the project's goals and seized the opportunity to access resources for program needs assessment, in-service training and state conference presentations. She worked closely with the state 619 Coordinator and readily adapted to a new collaborative strategy by incorporating her proposed activities into the state interagency team action plan. She provided a model for other team members to reframe their goals and activities to be consistent with the vision of the state team in order to build support.

Finally, the state of Georgia used the project to establish a Higher Education Council specifically focused on issues related to the training needs of early childhood special educators. The 619 Coordinator, although completely involved, played a support role - assuming responsibility for facilitating change in the existing statewide training and technical assistance network.

The Project's assumption that State 619 Coordinators would play a leadership role in facilitating the successful accomplishment of the grant activities proved problematic in two instances. The Project was originally planned to include the states of Maine and South Dakota over the three year time period. In Maine, the State 619 Coordinator was unable to focus attention on building the state interagency team and addressing the Project's goals and activities because of financial crises in state programs, the need to address other high priority activities, and limitations on travel and time resources imposed throughout state government. Although other persons in the state would have been willing to facilitate the development of a state level interagency team, without the involvement of the 619 Coordinator, the inclusion of issues related to early childhood special education could not be ensured. In South Dakota, the 619 Coordinator was able to identify interagency state level team members, conduct a project facilitated planning meeting in South Dakota, embark on action planning, and send some team members to the MPD 1996 Leadership Institute in Burlington in 1996. The primary focus of the team was on transition issues between early childhood special education and kindergarten. MPD Project staff joined with another UVM UAP Outreach Project, Project TEEM, to provide information in the focus area of transition. MPD staff provided additional support and information as needed to address issues of team building, collaborative decision making and action planning. The South Dakota team was able to address their goals for statewide training and awareness of transition issues, although they were hampered in the timeliness of their action plan by natural disasters in their state (severe blizzards and flooding) and a change in job responsibilities of their state 619 Coordinator. During the final year of the MPD Project, the State 619 Coordinator was less involved in the team's efforts and plans. With support from Project TEEM to implement their action plan, the remaining members of the state team had no agenda for MPD involvement for the final year of the Project.

Team Formation: The teaming literature clearly speaks to the challenges and the process of team development. Development phases such as forming, storming, and norming are often sited as an integral and necessary part of team formation. This project clearly exemplified the research. Over the course of their involvement, teams struggled to: identify and recruit key members; develop a shared vision and agenda; develop a plan of action; and accomplish plans. Although three years sounds like a reasonable amount of time, project staff would suggest that three years does not allow teams sufficient opportunity to form, develop trust, and take on the difficult task of creating system change. In each state, teams identified an "immediately pressing issue" and used project resources to address what can best be described as the tip of the iceberg. It was not until the end of the third year that teams seemed prepared to view and discuss "pressing issues" from a broader systems-based perspective.

Team Purpose: Another struggle faced by all teams can best be described a struggle to identify a "team purpose." Although related to the issue of team membership - the question of purpose was somewhat different. As states began constructing their teams one question arose consistently: "How is this team different from another team?" The easy answer spoke to grant funding and project goals. As project staff worked with teams, presented information on system change, and challenged teams to complete the **Pre-Institute Planning Tool**, teams quickly became aware of how the proposed project goals overlapped with existing state initiatives (most of which were clearly resource "poor"). Teams came up with a variety of answers. Vermont identified the Early Childhood Work Group Steering Committee as an existing team with a compatible mission and goals. Georgia built upon the roles and responsibilities of an existing Higher Education Consortium and established an early childhood sub-committee. Arizona created a "task force" as a sub-committee of a statewide early childhood special education network. Finally, New Hampshire struggled with the issue of purpose throughout the first year of the project. The struggles appeared to be related to perceived turf, reorganization within state agencies occurring at the same time, hesitancy to take on new initiatives or responsibilities, limited time, and already full plates of each member. A state-level New Hampshire team was not "functioning" until well into the second year, but they were eventually successful in creating a valuable and functional team and a guiding vision where none had existed.

Pre-Institute Planning Tool: By design, project staff had anticipated using the Pre-Institute Planning Tool to assist teams to evaluate current practice, to develop a plan of action, and to allocate project resources. Although all teams reviewed the tool, no team used the tool as designed.

Each state planning team spent considerable time in the study and discussion of the status of ECSE service delivery in its state, and in the identification of those best practices identified in the Model Program Development Project that need to be addressed in its state. For the most part, these teams, by the nature of the positions held by their various members, viewed the impact they could have on the quality of early childhood special education services as beginning with systems-level change. Project staff maintained a commitment to respect the unique context of each state and to establish a working relationship which encouraged, nurtured, and rewarded all program development and/or improvement efforts and activities.

Action #2: ***Leadership Training Institute:*** *To conduct a grant supported* ***Leadership Training Institute*** *for each participating state to provide* ***training related to the Model for Program Development*** *including* ***Best Practice Indicators for Early Childhood Special Education Programs*** *and assist State Planning Teams to develop a comprehensive* **State Plan of Action** *for the dissemination and implementation of best practices.*

Summary of Accomplishments: Ongoing contact with each team had an impact on project activities as they relate to the development and implementation of Leadership Institutes. While the original proposal had anticipated conducting Leadership Institutes in individual states, conversations between project staff and participating states suggested that state teams desired an opportunity to learn from each other "what worked and what didn't work" in their state level change efforts. The following discussion details the project activities related to leadership training. In addition, leadership training activities have been conducted in each state.

The focus of these trainings was determined by state priorities and information presented at the project-wide Leadership Training Institute.

Project staff conducted a two-day Leadership Training Institute in Burlington, Vermont during Years 1 and 2 (summers 1995 and 1996). Team members from the states of Arizona, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Vermont attended both institutes. The Georgia team attended the summer institute in 1996. The institutes were designed:

1. To provide state teams with the opportunity to come together for a period of time and in a setting that would allow them to **explore their own larger statewide issues** concerning the delivery of quality early childhood services.
2. To respond to requests from states to have an **opportunity to learn from each other "what worked and what didn't work"** in their state level change efforts.
3. To have an opportunity for project staff to **present information explaining the project's objectives, best practices, and basic philosophical underpinnings or "filters."** These filters - family-centered, culturally sensitive, inclusive, and collaborative - would serve as a starting point for state planning.
4. To **engage in on-going planning** with each state that would continue in a variety of different formats.
5. To **review the impact of project activities on constituent groups**.

In addition, two Leadership Institutes were designed specifically for the state of Arizona. The first institute facilitated the design of The Village Project. The second was designed to disseminate information about the philosophy and components of The Village Project to constituent groups statewide. Project staff also conduct a Leadership Institute for the Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium in Georgia. The purpose of this institute was to 1) introduce "best practice" in the delivery of services to young children with disabilities and their families; and 2) support faculty to develop the expertise necessary to incorporate this content into graduate and under-graduate programs. A final Leadership Institute was designed for all states in the summer of 1997. Vermont and New Hampshire state teams met to review team activities, to develop future action plans through creative problem solving strategies, and to provide leadership training from the Covey Institute to state team members and their invited constituent group members. Arizona and Georgia met in Arizona to revise and update their state action plans and to participate in the Covey Institute leadership training.

Action #3: ***Best Practice Modules:*** *To provide State Planning Teams with* ***Best Practice Modules*** *(including in-service training goals, overheads, materials, and activities) related to selected best practice component areas (e.g., family-centered services, child-find, assessment, curriculum, IEP, transition, personnel and program evaluation).*

Summary of Accomplishments: State teams were provided with current best practice information in the area of early childhood special education and early childhood education. The **Best Practice Indicators for Early Childhood Special Education Programs: A Self-Assessment Tool for Program Development/Improvement** was developed through the model demonstration and state outreach projects and addressed the eight program component areas listed above. This information was disseminated at the initiation of team development and assisted states in identifying critical team members and areas in which to focus their efforts. Modules and teaching materials were not developed for this tool. States used the information in the self-assessment to identify systems level issues that challenged their state and none selected additional training in the Best Practice Indicators as their priority for action. Other best practice information was also disseminated to states as it became available, including **DEC Recommended Practices: Indicators for Quality in Programs for Infants and Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families** (1993). These indicators, developed by the Division for Early Childhood, were similar to the Best Practice Indicators. They were shared with state team members who used them to examine practices they currently employed in specific programs and to specifically guide their vision of family participation. **The Pre-Institute Planning Tool**, developed by the MPD Project, was used by teams to reflect on current practice in early childhood programs and services in their state, to identify key contextual issues, and to describe their current level of collaboration between agency personnel and constituent groups. **Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of our Youngest Children** (Carnegie Corporation, 1994) and **MAP and Track** (Knitzer and Page, 1996) were provided to state team members to describe a context of early childhood issues nationally and to help identify priority activities for state teams. Specific training on transition, assessment and early childhood lenses and practices (i.e. family centered, culturally sensitive, collaborative and developmentally appropriate) were developed and delivered by MPD Project staff through Leadership Institutes and through subsequent trainings in New Hampshire, Vermont, South Dakota, and Arizona as a component of each state's action plan.

Through facilitation of annual Leadership Institutes, team meetings, and training activities in each state, teams were presented with best practice information related to their identified priorities related to collaborative team process. **Continuity in Early Childhood: Elements and Indicators of Home, School and Community Linkages** (Regional Educational Laboratories, 1993) was presented to state teams to assist them in identifying best practices in shared leadership and decision making; comprehensive and integrated services for children; and families and education, involvement and empowerment of families. Concepts and tools from **Together We Can: A guide for crafting a pro-family system of education and human services** (Melaville, Blank & Asayesh, 1993) was presented as a step by step process for building collaborative interagency teams and evaluating their accomplishments. Johnson and Johnson's (1987) description of collaborative teaming in **Joining Together** was presented to explore important components of team functioning, e.g., face to face interaction, communication and trust, shared leadership, personal accountability, resource and goal interdependence. The Creative Problem Solving approach developed by Parnes and Osborne (Parnes, 1992) was taught and used as teams developed their critical questions and action plans.

Teams were also provided with best practice information related to self assessment and project assessment. With support from NEC*TAS and the use of the literature, MPD Project staff developed training and evaluation tools that the state level teams could use in determining progress toward their own goals. **Goal Attainment Scaling, Applications, Theory and Measurement** (Kiresik, Smith & Cardillo, 1994) was used to present the principals of rubric assessment. Project staff developed a scale for measuring goal attainment for state level teams which were all attempting to enhance quality of early childhood programs and services, but who were each working with different action plans. The Goal Attainment Scale developed for the Project addressed the areas of state team formation, planning and impact on key constituencies. The Scale and results provided by 1996 Leadership Institute Participants are included in Appendix A, Goal Attainment Scale, August, 1996. The 1996 Institute participants also spent time determining which participant groups were affected by their state action plans. Using a large group recording process, they considered if their plans had **A**-Actual Impact on the target group; or **I**-Intended Impact on this group; and which of their activities were the result of MPD support and assistance. The summaries of constituent group impact of activities for states of South Dakota, New Hampshire, Georgia, Arizona, and Vermont are attached in Appendix B.

Leadership skills were a priority of all state level team members. The MPD Project disseminated materials related to **The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People** (Covey, 1989) and supported and facilitated training for state level team by The Covey Institute as a final Leadership Institute activity in 1997.

Action #4: ***Technical Assistance:*** *To provide on-site and long distance* ***Technical Assistance*** *to each of the State Planning Teams as they implement their Plan of Action.*

Summary of Accomplishments: Project staff facilitated, supported and followed the process of each team's movement from the discovery of a statewide context for change, through the development of their vision, to the implementation of the vision at the program/provider level. The technical assistance provided by MPD program staff included: communicating with state team members by mail, e-mail and phone; arranging and facilitating team meetings and/or conferences in each state; supporting attendance of family members at team activities; recording and disseminating minutes and materials generated by teams; conducting workshops, trainings, and/or program evaluations in accordance with each team's plan of action; and assisting teams in evaluating their progress toward their goals. Project staff also worked with NEC*TAS and NERRC (in collaboration with The Technical Assistance for Parents Project, The Regional Lab for Educational Improvement, Resource Access Projects from the Region, and State Education Agency personnel) to plan, facilitate and follow-up on a three-day Institute attended by teams from Vermont and New Hampshire in Sturbridge, MA in November, 1995.

While technical assistance from MPD Project clearly had a state level focus, there were also issues that states had in common. State teams were eager to share perspectives, experiences and resources with other Project states. Project staff facilitated this sharing and inter state technical assistance through planning, developing and hosting Leadership Institutes in August of 1995 and 1996 in Burlington, VT. In the summer of 1997, Leadership Institutes were held in two locations and addressed agendas that were specific to their individual action plans. Georgia and Arizona met in Arizona; Vermont and New Hampshire met in a central location in Vermont.

What became clear is that the four target groups/areas identified in the original proposal (children and families, higher education, state policy, and service providers) were not only target populations, but also critical players in accomplishing each state's vision and plans of action. It also became clear that technical assistance required to support the timelines and activities related to each target group must be designed in response to the state level context. For example, in the state of Georgia where changes in services to young children with disabilities were being prompted by changes in state licensing, it made sense that the early stages of technical assistance were focused on personnel in institutions of higher education. In Vermont, where there was a long history of inclusion and a well-established Early Childhood Workgroup that has had as its goal a more unified system, MPD technical assistance focused on the State Level Team's efforts to implement that goal through the development of a comprehensive interagency service agreement. In New Hampshire, where sharing of information among families, programs and agencies was a high priority, technical assistance provided support and training related to developing a Web page for parents and professionals.

The original MPD Proposal suggested a linear approach to systems change, supported by technical assistance at each stage of team formation, vision development, action planning, and implementation through dissemination of best practice information and training. We learned that a very multidimensional focus and non-linear process evolve when individuals from diverse systems come together to work toward the accomplishment of shared goals. The focus of technical assistance, likewise, needed to be more flexible and responsive to the specific action plans of each state. While the ultimate goal was to impact the quality of services to young children with disabilities and their families, the process of providing technical assistance was much like peeling an onion. At every point, teams and MPD staff became more and more aware of the inter-relatedness of service systems. They needed to be responsive to personal agendas, the histories and priorities of agencies, and to the context of policies that provide major barriers to the accomplishment of goals and visions.

Best practices in Early Childhood Special Education and Early Intervention are based on the belief that children and families must be linked to their communities and served by a high quality, seamless system of service delivery based on best practices. This can only be accomplished through the development of inclusive care and education settings, and the establishment of meaningful partnerships among the many agencies and individuals that serve these children and families. To date, the systems change literature reflects issues related to change within singular systems. Our knowledge of systems change when multiple systems must change together toward the realization of shared goals is in its infancy. Similarly, the kind of technical assistance needed to facilitate this kind of change, requires an effort to join the dance, not to direct it. As Margaret Whealley & Myron Kellner-Rogers (1996) describe:

> No one forges ahead independently, molding the world to his or her presence while the rest trail admiringly behind. We tinker ourselves into existence by unobserved interactions with the players who present themselves to us. Environment, enemies, allies - all are affected by our efforts as we are by theirs. The systems we create are chosen together. They are the result of dances, not wars (p. 4).

For individual state summaries, see Appendix C.

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Appendix A

Goal Attainment Scale
August, 1996

GOAL ATTAINMENT FOLLOW-UP GUIDE

Focus of Change: A State Level Team plans collaboratively to enhance the quality of early childhood programs and services which impact key constituencies

Level of Attainment	Scale 1 State Team	Scale 2 Planning	Scale 3 Impact on key constituents
Much less -2 than expected	The state level team does not meet.	The state level team will be unable to identify a shared vision or philosophy to guide change efforts.	The actions of the state level team do not impact any constituent group in the early childhood community.
Somewhat less -1 than expected	The state level team meets as needed but does not have representative membership from all constituent groups.	The state level team has not yet identified shared goals to support their vision/philosophy.	The actions of the state level team are not intended to impact all constituent groups.
Expected level 0 of outcome	A state level team which includes individuals involved in leadership roles in early childhood programs and services (family members, state agency personnel, service providers and higher education personnel) will meet and address issues relevant to enhancing quality of early childhood programs and services in the state.	The state level team will identify a shared philosophy/vision, common goals and specific action plans to guide, focus and implement their collaborative efforts to enhance the quality of early childhood programs and services in the state.	The planning and activity initiated by the state level team is intended to impact key constituents in the early childhood community, including family members, state agency personnel, service providers and higher education personnel.
Somewhat more +1 than expected	The state level team will meet as needed to follow-up on actions and activities, sharing responsibilities and roles for team leadership and task accomplishment.	The state level team will accomplish their original action plan and begin to consider new goals or actions.	The actions of the state level planning are intended to impact the four major constituent groups in the early childhood community and include a measure to assess that impact.
Much more +2 than expected	The state level team has decision making authority to plan and implement changes in state level programs and services.	The state level team will commit to ongoing collaborative strategic and long term planning, involving appropriate team membership or task force configurations, to enhance the quality of early childhood programs and services	Evaluation of the activities or actions of the state level team have impacted major constituent groups in the early childhood community.
Comments			

GOAL ATTAINMENT SCALE SUMMARY

	STATE TEAM					PLANNING					IMPACT ON CONSTITUENCIES				
	SD	VT	GA	AZ	NH	SD	VT	GA	AZ	NH	SD	VT	GA	AZ	NH
Much less than expected												2			
Somewhat less than expected			4		2		1			1	1				
Expected level of outcome		3					5	1		2	2	7	4		
Somewhat more than expected	4	1			1	4	1	4			2				
Much more than expected		3					2								

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COMMENTS

South Dakota - none
Vermont - none
Georgia - none

Arizona

- *Planning/Somewhat More*

- "Village Institute with MPD"

- *State Team/Much More*

- "Preschool input Com. - pre MPD"
- "Decision making authority is given but at the grace of the authorities.

- *Impact on Constituents*

- The impact/evaluation is llimited to the pilot LEAs and will never be implemented in every LEA.

- *General*

- "This form has many eyes of opinion:
  1) The 619 Coordinator
  2) The original team involved
  3) The team that exists now in the implementation roles."

- "Consistent tie to long term goals by 1-2 people state level gave floor of opportunity.
  Other team membership changes according to need, varying over time and that has worked with the Que Pasa model."

New Hampshire

- *State Team*

- "I see both -1 and +1 as true, while our team composition is weak , we meet, follow up, share, etc. but our task accomplishments are (or have not been) clear."

Appendix B
Constituent Group Impact of Activities

Arizona
Georgia
New Hampshire
South Dakota
Vermont

August, 1996

ARIZONA

A=ACTUAL I=INTENDED *=RESULT OF MPD

State Level Team Activities	Provider	Families and Kids	Higher Education	State Policy	Development of a Model for Program Development/Improvement
Original Village Planning (MPD) •	AI	I		AI	
Development of Village Project (Information gathering) (MPD) •	I	AI			I
Building of Teams (Village Council)		I			I
Networking Conference (MPD) •	AI	I			
Implementing Village Project • -How to's -Sending surveys -Data analysis -Focus groups (Deer Valley) -Report	AI	I		AI	I

GEORGIA

A=ACTUAL I=INTENDED *=RESULT OF MPD

State Level Team Activities	**Provider**	**Families and Kids**	**Higher Education**	**State Policy**
Meeting some Higher Education and State Personnel to get Focus •				A
Maintained Contact - Brainstormed ARD Focus •			A	A
MPD Leadership Institute co-sponsored by DOE. Determined Four Issues: Attrition, Certification, Inservice and Courses *			A	A
Needs Assessment to be sent to Providers about Inservice Training Needs	I	I	A	

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A=ACTUAL I=INTENDED *=RESULT OF MPD

State Level Team Activities	**Provider**	**Families and Kids**	**Higher Education**	**State Policy**
Identification of State Level MPD Team Members *	AI	A		A
Attend MPD Leadership Institute PTAN QA Tool/Storbridge/Training *	A	A		
Attended Storbridge 619 Conference Vision Development *	A	A		
Vision Statement Sharing with Others Revising *	A	AI	A	
Attended MPD Leadership Institute * -Explore PR (web page) -Explore ways to join in Child Care Initiatives regarding children with Special Needs	AI	AI		
Portland Team A Meeting Focused on Collaborative for QA in Child Care	A	A		

SOUTH DAKOTA

A=ACTUAL I=INTENDED *=RESULT OF MPD

State Level Team Activities		Provider	Families and Kids	Higher Education	State Policy
Formed a Task Force		A	A	A	
Conducted Symposia: Awareness and Transition	•	A	A	A	
Development of a Family Survey	•	I	I		
Awareness of Transition at the State Education Conference	•	A		A	
Symposium Brochure to 87 School Districts	•	A			
Attended MPD Leadership Institute	•	A	A	A	
Developed Vision Statement of Goals and Plans of Action		A	A	A	

VERMONT

(A=ACTUAL I=INTENDED *=RESULT OF MPD)

State Level Team Activities		**Provider**	**Families and Kids**	**Higher Education**	**State Policy**
Formation of an MPD State Level Team	•	I	I	AI	AI
Created a Vision and Craft a Plan to Implement	•	AI	I		A
Design, Write and have Official Signing of an Early Childhood Service Agreement	•	I	I	I	AI
MPD State Level Team becomes Steering Committee for Early Childhood	•	AI	I	AI	AI
Legislature Requires Plan for Combined Admin., Funding of Dept. of Ed. and Agency of HS					AI
SRS Plans to Reconfigure How to Fund Child Care Service (Starting Points Support)		I	I	I	AI
Development of Family Support Council with Family Participation			I	I	I
Redesign of MRDD System to be Family Centered		I	I	I	I
Healthy Babies to go Statewide		AI	AI		
Core Program Standards Reviewed and Endorsed	•	AI		I	
Career Lattice Reviewed and Being Further Developed		I		I	
Parent Leadership Committee-Families as Partners	•		AI		I
Evaluation Initiatives			I	I	I
Public Awareness Campaign	•		AI	I	AI

State Level Team Activities

#Activities 34 Families and Children 2 Higher Ed 15 State Policy 21 Other 4

South Dakota

A - Form a state level team (task force)
A - Symposium - awareness transition (MPD)
A - Awareness of transition at state ed. conference, school board and teachers (MPD)
A - Vision statement, goal areas, action plan
A - Symposium brochure to 87 school districts (MPD)
A - Attend MPD Institute (MPD)
I - Develop family survey (MPD)

New Hampshire

A,I - Identification of state level team members (MPD)
A - Leadership Institute training, PTAN QA tool. training and Sturbridge meeting (MPD)
A - Sturbridge meeting, vision development (MPD)
A,I - Vision statement, sharing, revising (MPD)
A - Portland team - collaboration on QA for child care (MPD)
A,I - Leadership Institute - explore PR and web page, how join in child care initiative re kids w special needs (MPD)

Georgia

A - Meeting of a few hi ed people and state to get focus and decided interest in working w MPD
A - Maintained contact and brainstormed about focus of (MPD)
A - Leadership Institute - cosponsored by DOE determined 4 issues: attrition, in-service, courses, certification

Arizona

A,I- Original Village planning (MPD)
A,I - Development of Village Project - info gathering (MPD)
A,I- Building of teams (village council)
A,I- Networking conference (MPD)
A,I - Implementing Village Project - how to's, cending surveys, data amalysis, focus groups, report

Vermont

A - Created a vision and plan of action (MPD)
A - Core program standards reviewed and finalized
A - Career lattice revised and being developed
A - Steering Committee established - coord. w ECWG (MPD)
A - Parent leadership committee intiated
A - Evaluation Initiative
A - Public Awareness Campaign
A - State legis. requires a report on funding streams as of 4/96
A - SRS to reconfigure funding of chaild care services w Carnegie Starting Points supports
A - Devopment of Family Support Council (w family partic.)
A - Redesign of MRDD system to be family centered (early ch.)
A - Healthy Babies to go statewide

TEAMS' OBSERVATIONS ON RESULTS OF CONSTITUENCY BOARD

- More intended the actual impact
- Less impact in higher ed.
- Surprise that most impact isn't in "state" column
- If constituencies are "involves" does that connote impact
- You can't go from state level of activities to impact on children and families in a short time
- Local and state change can happen simultaneously

IMPLICATIONS

Planning:

Strengthen link between state and higher ed reps

Technical Assistance:

Support for maintaining state level teams

Can UVM/NERCC develop resource materials (ala notebooks) for other target groups

Appendix C

State Summaries

National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development (MPD).

A History of the Collaboration between Arizona and the National MPD Project

Arizona's involvement with the Model Program Development (MPD) Outreach Project began at the time of conception. Lynn Busenbark (619 Coordinator for the Department of Education) wrote a letter of support for the project proposal noting that Arizona had been closely following the activities of MPD and was aware of materials that had been developed through the project. Upon notification of funding project staff met with a small group of individuals to determine how MPD might best support the agenda Arizona's early childhood community has begun to delineate through the Que PASA project.

Que PASA is a project of the Arizona Department of Education, Special Education Section, and is designed to promote continued growth and improvement in preschool programs and services for young children with disabilities, operated in conjunction with public school districts. The four components of Que PASA are:

1. **The Arizona Self Study Project (ASSP)**- designed to emphasize the importance of developmentally appropriate practices and quality program standards for young children as identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

2. **The Arizona Early Childhood Special Education Program Design Project (AZ EC-SPED)**- designed to emphasize the blending of developmentally appropriate practices and special education strategies in environments that celebrate diversity.

3. The Arizona Village Project- designed to emphasize the value of family-focused community embedded preschool programs and to facilitate school districts evaluation the status of their program against criteria developed with Arizona.

4. The Arizona Real Opportunities for Measuring Preschool Education Results Project (ROMPER)- designed to focus on program effectiveness by looking at the collective growth of children in the areas of communication development, social interaction, and environmental competence. ROMPER is to be used as a tool for instructional decision making at the curriculum level rather than at the individual child level.

Activity #1: Designing a Plan of Action for MPD in Arizona

In November 1994 project staff met with Lynn Busenbark (619 coordinator), Alan Taylor from Northwest Human Development, Jennifer Campbell from Paradise Valley School District, and Jan Myerpeter as Head Start representative to design a plan of action for MPD activities in Arizona. The team determined that the MPD National Outreach Project would best support Arizona's program development efforts by using project staff to facilitate a Leadership Training Institute that would give shape to **Arizona's Village Project**.

Outcome: It was determined that MPD would facilitate a 3 day Leadership Training Institute that would give shape to the Village Project. MPD project staff would work with Lynn Busenbark to design and implement the institute. Lynn would identify and invite a representative group of individuals to attend the institute.

Activity #2: The Arizona Village Project Institute

In January 1995, MPD project staff facilitated a three day Leadership Training Institute for the Arizona Department of Education, Special Education Section (ADE/SES). Institute participants included representatives from public schools, state agencies and private programs (a list of participant is attached). The goal of the institute was articulated by Lynn Busenbark in the welcome address:

> **The goal of our work together will be to establish a system of obtaining parent and community feedback in the provision of comprehensive preschool services, so that participating school districts can decide what systematic and ongoing changes are necessary to meet the individual needs of children within their families.**

Lynn further introduced the intended outcomes of the institute as:

1. Identify critical issues that should be addressed by all participating communities probed.
2. Identify all stakeholders who should provide input to each community's Self Study Process.
3. Development of a Model for the Village Project Self-Study Process to be disseminated to communities.

Lynn and UVM - MPD Project Staff developed a flexible agenda for the three day Institute that allowed for further refinement of the Village Project using group problem- solving, consensus decision-making, and action planning strategies. Institute participants used a constructivist approach, building upon their own program resources and varied personal experiences with early childhood services in Arizona, to develop a shared knowledge-base, regarding issues important to families and community-based Early Childhood Special Education programs. MPD staff provided additional information from the literature to assist in the clarification of definitions, assumptions and best practices from a national perspective. Using the Creative Problem-Solving Approach (Osborne and Parnes), MPD staff guided large and small group discussions, negotiations and consensus decision-making processes intended to define the "hopes" that group members had for the Village Project. At the end of the three day Institute, participants had agreed upon a description, a rationale, essential criteria, and a statement of intended outcomes for the Village Project. The group had outlined a multi-level, multi-phase process for the Village Project that requires further refinement.

Process of the Institute

The background and an overview of the Village Project was presented by Lynn at the beginning of the Institute. Angela Capone described the involvement of UVM - MPD Outreach Grant and the tentative agenda for the three days was reviewed. Participants and staff introduced themselves, describing personal and/or professional interests in the Village Project, and in services and issues related to young children, families, schools, and communities in Arizona. Participants then divided into smaller groups to discuss, record, and share their "hopes" for the Village Project, and the questions or concerns they felt needed to be addressed. An initial listing of "hopes" was begun and later expanded upon. This list served as "facts" to be addressed and discussed as the group began to clarify the purpose, rationale, criteria, outcomes, and process of the Village Project.

Institute team members engaged in a number of activities (e.g., personal reflection, mind mapping, fishbowl conversations, nominal group decision-making, and other group activities), to further explore differing assumptions, meanings, and experiences attached to specific language and concepts including "family centered," "school linked," "community based," "collaborative," "stakeholder," "consumer," etc. Participants considered and reviewed information regarding various strategies and tools used to assess and plan community-based initiatives. Participants also shared resources, materials and strategies from their own projects and programs with other members of the group. Additional materials and handouts were prepared by MPD Project Staff related to group process techniques for problems-solving and action planning.

Outcomes of the Institute

The Institute participants articulated a purpose, rationale, essential criteria, and potential outcome of the Village Project. A flexible multi-level and multi-phase process for participating communities was outlined and remains to be refined.

The Purpose of the Village Project

The "hopes" for the Village Project were eventually refined and articulated as common themes and further discussed. The list of themes cluster in the following categories included

Operating Principle

1. To facilitate and improve community, home and school interaction.

Refining Strategies

2. To "engage" in consensus building and problem-solving around identified strengths and goals of the community.
3. To provide a tool and a process for identifying community and consumer satisfaction with existing Early Childhood Special Education services and implementing new ideas for quality change for preschool children.
4. To open communication around issues of Early Childhood Special Education from the "bottom up."

Process for Program Development/Improvement

5. To collect information regarding special education pre-school programs.
6. To develop a method to share information regarding family needs with the community in order to reinforce and improve early childhood preschool programs.

Themes which could be agreed upon by all participants were adopted, while others remained as issues/cares or concerns to be addressed at a future time. The consensually accepted purpose of the Village Project was eventually restated as:

The Village Project is a DYNAMIC team-based process which will offer school districts an opportunity to identify and strengthen community partnerships as well as determine consumer satisfaction with services for families who have young children with special needs.

The Rationale, Criteria and Potential Outcomes of the Village Project

Based upon this common understanding of the Village Project, the members of the Institute Team worked to develop statements of rationale, essential criteria, and potential outcomes of the Village Project.

The Process of The Village Project

Participants began to work on elements of the process on Day 3. The process of the Village Project is one of building partnership. It is conceived of as a **multi-phase and a multi-level process**. There are six potential phases of the project that will be accomplished over a specified length of time (e.g., one - two years). The community will set a plan for itself that describes which phases it will move through in Year 1 and which phases it will attempt in a subsequent year. In projecting their work on different Phases, they will identify their needs for process training, financial support, and/or continued training.

The **Phases** at the community level are as follows:

I. **The Creation Phase:** In which partners in the community are identified and assumptions and expectations of partners working on the project are clarified and shared.

   Important partners who would potentially share an interest in the purpose and outcomes of the Village Project were discussed and would include family members, school district administrators, Early Childhood Special Education staff and administrators, health department personnel, Part H program personnel, Head Start staff, teachers, representatives from Children with Special Health Care Needs, Tribal Councils, legislators, and other local, regional, or state public or private early childhood service providers.

and community members interested in local early childhood services and programs.

II. **The Detail or Design Phase:** In which questions relevant to the community are articulated and methods for gathering data or information are planned and developed.

The local Village Project Team will work together to develop key questions of interest in their community, and will plan and design the most appropriate methods for identifying respondents (who should answer the questions), how the information should be gathered (method), in what setting might it be gathered (e.g., home visit, community forum etc.), who will gather data, and what resources they will require to carry out their plan (resources might include time, survey development, printing, mailing, telephone, focus forum facilitation, training for interviewers, data analysis, reimbursement for family child care expenses, etc.).

The team will address the essential criteria of the Village Project in developing their questions and methods, e. g., the questions will be formulated by a team, the strategies selected will be realistic in terms of cost and manpower, and they will generate information from a broad range of community members, utilizing multiple strategies which are culturally sensitive. The information generated will be easily understood, easy to analyze, usable for applying quick fixes, or for formulating action plans, and the strategies used will serve to open doors of communication for further probing and problem-solving.

III. **The Implementation Phase:** In which information will be gathered from community stakeholders as outlined in the Detail and Design Phase.

The implementation phases will be supported by combined resources of the Village Project of the ADE and other collaborating agencies and persons as described in the Detail and Design Phase.

IV. **The Evaluation Phase:** In which both the process and the content of the information generated by the Village Project is evaluated by local team members and the community.

The evaluation is formative in nature, intended: a) to enhance quick and logical "quick fix" remedies; b) to guide programmatic planning, adjustments and change; c) to facilitate community-planning and systems change; and d) to maintain and improve the process of partnership in early childhood programs and services. Evaluation should provide a direction for enhancing services and should address needed actions, support or systems' change at the local, regional and/or state level. The community should be invited to share the results of the information gathering and to comment on the effectiveness of the processes used, with the intention of opening the doors for on-going communication and sharing of information between families, school and community service providers.

V. **The Re-Creation, Acknowledgment, and Celebration Phase:**

In which members of the team revisit their assumptions and expectations of working as community partners and consider who else should be involved in the partnership process as they address new problems or issues that emerged through the information gathering activities. When stakeholders are identified and recruited to address emerging or identified issues, the process of assumption and expectation clarification begins again, followed by a new cycle of detail and design in action planning, implementation, evaluation, and re-creation.

This is a time to celebrate what is working for young children and families in the community, to acknowledge the contributions and efforts of team and community members, and to celebrate the relationship building that has resulted within the Village Project Partnership. It is a time to tell stories and to think about the next steps in addressing areas of need in the community.

VI. **Sharing Phase:** In which information gathered through the Village Project self-study is shared with the community.

Information sharing plans and strategies are developed and maintained with the hope of increasing community awareness about successful programs and services, sharing needs identified as priorities in the community, seeking support and resources for new projects or actions and strengthening ongoing community collaboration.

The Village Project Process was also envisioned as a **multi-level process**. The Village Project process may be addressed at several different levels, depending upon the stage of collaborative partnership that already exists in the community, leadership resources, previous experience with other partnership efforts, and the time required for team building, identification of characteristics of the community, and articulation of shared assumptions and expectations in the early childhood community. The community may identify themselves differently, e.g., as a single school, a school district, or a cooperative. Communities may operate on any of the following levels for a period of time that reflects their unique needs:

1. ***Awareness level*** (of issues and concerns related to early childhood programs and services).
2. ***Identification level*** (of stakeholders and key questions, concerns, and issues).
3. ***Commitment level*** (to engage in a collaborative-based exploration of resources, supports, and needs of young children and their families).
4. ***Enchantment level*** (with the resources and programs that are working well).
5. ***Expansion level*** (moving toward new approaches to addressing emerging issues in local early childhood services, or into other related areas of community concern).

At each level, a different type of resource or support might be required. Resources and supports from the State level of the Village Project or other collaborating agencies or programs might include technical assistance, training, and systems development for execution, team building, or communication.

Activity #3: Exploring the System Change Process

In August 1995, MPD staff brought representatives from each participating state (Vermont, New Hampshire, Arizona) to Vermont for a 2-day Leadership Training Institute designed to: explore issues related to system change, facilitate networking across teams, and facilitate planning of Year 2 activities. Lynn presented Arizona's Que PASA project as a model for program improvement/development efforts related to the system change process. Project staff met with Lynn to explore possible Year 2 activities.

Outcome: Two MPD Project activities were identified for Year 2. First, project staff would review the Village Project Survey Instruments. Second, project staff would conduct 3 sessions at Arizona's 1995 Networking Conference including:

- a full-day Leadership Training Institute focusing on Family, School, and Community Partnerships in the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education services;
- a half-day session for service providers focusing on the role of families and community agencies in the provision of Early Childhood Special Education services; and
- a half-day session for parents focusing on the role of families and community agencies in the provision of Early Childhood Special Education services.

(see attached descriptions of these sessions)

Activity #4: Arizona's Networking Conference

Two members of the University of Vermont MPD Project were invited to continue MPD support of the Arizona Village Project. Activities included: 1) the development of a module on strategies for creating/facilitating school/community collaboration for the purpose of increasing the quality of early childhood services available to families in Arizona; 2) facilitation of three workshops to present this module; and 3) consultation with the Arizona Village Project Statewide Coordinator.

Module on School/Community Collaboration

The Village Project is a dynamic team-based process which offers school districts an opportunity to identify and strengthen community partnerships as well as to determine consumer satisfaction with services for families who have young children with special needs. The module was designed to provide an opportunity for participants to explore the concepts of community, collaboration, shared resources, strategies for change and partnerships as they relate to: a) creating and maintaining effective and respectful family-provider relationships; b) ensuring the quality of services; c) providing services in community-based inclusive settings; and d) promoting seamless transitions for young children and their families. The five stage process for change described in "Together We Can: A guide for crafting a pro-family system of education and human services," US Department of Education and US Department of Health and Human Services served as the core of the module. This process was described with examples that related to the Village Project, and participants were encouraged to examine their own district or program to explore the implications of these strategies, and discuss barriers to each of the stages.

Presentation and Facilitation of the Module on School/Community Collaboration

The Module was presented in three formats during a three-day Networking Conference for Early Childhood Educators/Special Educators in Arizona. The first format was an intensive day-long examination of the strategies and challenges of school/community collaboration. It specifically focused on the Arizona Village Project which is designed to enhance this kind of collaboration. Two school districts have been chosen to participate in the Village Project this year, and a representative for one of those districts attended the day-long workshop, sharing her insights and asking the group to help her organize and plan strategies for her first community-wide meeting. The second format was a 1 1/2 hour workshop designed for program directors and administrators, and the third format was a 1 1/2 hour workshop designed for parents.

Activity #5 Ongoing Communication with the Arizona Village Project Statewide Coordinator

Lynn Busenbark and project staff have maintained communication relative to the progress of the Village Project. In addition, she shared the draft of the surveys which will be used to determine knowledge of, and satisfaction with, the early childhood services provided in the district. It will be sent to related community agencies, parents with children in the preschools, preschool staff in the chosen district, and parents getting services from the early intervention system in the chosen district. It was decided that it might be useful to use MPD staff to assist pilot sites once survey data had been completed.

Activity #6: Leadership Training Institute: Vermont 1996

In August 1996 a five member team including: Jeanne Dutton (Bellaire Elementary School), Kay Lund (Exceptional Student Services, Arizona Department of Education), Gale Van Der Sloot (Arizona Department of Education), Lynn Busenbark (Arizoan Department of Education) and Grtechen Conway (Parker Unified School District) attended the second Leadership Training Institute. For the purposes of MPD the goal of this institute to gather evaluation data to assist us in considering the impact of change on the four constituency groups of providers, families and kids, higher education, and state policy. From a state perspective, the goal of the institute was to develop plans to guide the last year and to have the opportunity for information sharing and networking.

During Day One the team reviewed activities accomplished during years 1 and 2 of the project and identified the impact of each (either actual or intended) on the four constituency groups. Table One, presented below, summarizes year 1 and 2 activities and links each activity with a target group. Data collected by the two pilot sites framed a rich discussion about the Village Project. Specifically, the team explored issues such as: the role of local village councils, prioritizing action based on survey data, implementation issues, and the relationship of the Village Project/Que PASA to Higher Education. As a result of these discussions the team identified two primary goals for Year 3 activities.

Goal One: Village Project

The team determined that it was important to reconvene the participants in the original Village Project Institute. A sub-group of original participants will be invited to attend a planning meeting in early December. The purpose of this planning meeting is to construct an agenda for the follow-up institute and to identify materials to disseminate prior to the meeting.

Goal Two: Higher Education

Based on an analysis of previous activities it was determined that since activities conducted thus far have had either a direct impact or have the potential of impacting three of the four targeted constituency groups (i.e., providers, families and kids, and state policy) Year 3 activities should focus on relationship between Que PASA, and institutions of higher education. The team has decided to use a portion of the resources available through MPD to design and implement a spring institute for individuals involved in the preparation of early childhood/early childhood special educators. The foci of this institute will be: 1) dissemination of information related to the Que PASA project; and 2) strategies for incorporating Que PASA into coursework and other personnel preparation activities.

MODEL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

AUGUST 15 - 16, 1996

ARIZONA PLAN OF ACTION

ORGANIZATIONAL NEED:

- How to respond to program need
  - Maintain flexibility
  - Offer options

PROGRAM NEED:

* How to decide the role of the Village Council	Short Term Priority
* After Gathering after Data	
* Disseminate Surveys	
* Facilitating Consensus Building	Long Term Priority
* Develop Recommendations	
* Develop Ongoing Communication	
* Ongoing Data Collection	

GOALS FOR SPRING 1997

- Plan Spring Meeting (to occur at DEC)
  - -Identify materials to send out prior to Spring Meeting
  - -Develop agenda for Spring Meeting
  - -Focus on plan for reconvening large group
  - -Work on issues related to Higher Ed
  - -Bring Higher Ed together relative to Que Pasa
  - -Finalize these plans at Spring Meeting
  - -People who will receive synopsis:
    - Contractor / Tommy Pierce
    - Part H
    - Gretchen/Jeanne
    - Judy Walker (Pilot Parents)
    - Alan Taylor
    - DD Rep. / Ida Fitch
    - Leigh Hunter

- Reconvene Original Large Group
  - -Fill them In
    - What's been done
    - Where the project is now
    - Role of "Advisory Council" as advisors to the Village Project
    - Institutionalizing Village Project beyond Lynn's connection to the project

National Replication of a Model For Early Childhood Special Education Program Development (MPD)

A History of the Collaboration Between Georgia and the National MPD Project

Georgia was invited to join the MPD project in the fall of 1995. Early discussions with Georgia's 619 Coordinator suggested that in light of Georgia's focus on issues related to the manner in which services are provided to young children with disabilities (e.g., certification, inclusion, personnel preparation) MPD would be an appropriate vehicle for supporting individuals involved in personnel preparation to come together to engage in dialogue. The goal of this dialogue would be to: 1) assure that the both the content and the context of personnel programs would enable students to develop the skills required by the early childhood special education/early intervention system as it is being re-configured; and 2) incorporate "best practice" and personnel preparation standards as defined by DEC and NAEYC into the individual program plans-of-action institutions of higher education were beginning to develop.

In early November MPD staff met with faculty from 4 colleges and the coordinator of Georgia's Higher Education Council, to develop a plan that would match MPD's resources with Georgia's needs and goals. This preliminary meeting resulted in the following plan-of-action:

1. MPD staff would develop and implement inservice training for faculty involved in the preparation of individuals to work with young children and young children with disabilities.

2. The inservice training will be framed by the standards for Early Childhood Special Education that have been developed collaboratively by The Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These standards have been disseminated to the field via the DEC Communicator. In addition, these standards have been adopted by NCATE, and will be incorporated into the accreditation process.

3. The inservice training will be incorporated into the activities of the Higher Education Council. It is anticipated that this

inservice training will take place early this Spring.

The group from Georgia also discussed the possibility that results of this activity could frame follow-up activities with Special Education Coordinators and Superintendents focusing on: the uniqueness of early childhood special education and best practice in early childhood special education.

In June 1996, project staff in coordination with faculty from Institutions of Higher Education implemented a one day Leadership Training Institute designed to explore issues related to the preparation of personnel to work with young children with disabilities and their families. Invitations were sent to the Chairs of Special Education Departments at each of Georgia's Institutions of Higher Education. Chairs were asked to extend an invitation to a member of their faculty who would, in turn, extend an invitation to a colleague in the early childhood department. The goal was to create an opportunity for faculty from the disciplines of early childhood and early childhood special education to engage in a dialogue focusing on emerging trends in the provision of services for young children with disabilities and their families, and implications of those trends for personnel preparation. Representative from two institutions attended the institute including: Juilianne Cripe and Julie Lee from Valdosta and Katherine McCormick from Columbus College. Discussions focused on existing training opportunities and issues across the state. Participants decided to use Year 3 MPD resources to address training issues. The group agreed to use the August Leadership Training Institute as the opportunity to identify specific Year 3 activities related to training.

Model Program Development Project:
Georgia

In September, 1995, the 619 Coordinator organized a workgroup of individuals interested Preschool Special Education to identify issues and resources within the state. While many topics were discussed the need for ongoing support and technical assistance for teachers of children with disabilities ages 3 - 5 years was identified as a priority. The group discussed the diversity of population served, the growing numbers of children in need of services, the increased numbers of children with significant disabilities, and the breadth of information necessary for delivering services, changing practices such as inclusion and integrated therapy as causal factors for the high rate of attrition of teachers in the preschool handicapped programs. Recommendations included the development of a survey for teachers to identify their current practices and a needs assessment for future training topics, the continuation of transmission of the endorsement courses via distance learning to increase numbers of teachers available, determination of the availability of course work within the university system for preschool handicapped endorsement, to collaborate with GLRS preschool activities, and to continue to network to support the development of a statewide training and technical assistance system for preschool special education. During this meeting, resources at the University of Vermont (UVM) were identified as available to enhance the efforts of the workgroup. The group agreed to participate in the Model Program Development Project (MPD) to further their efforts.

Members from the workgroup met with UVM - MPD in November to initiate plans. A preliminary plan of action was developed to include:
1) MPD staff would develop and implement inservice training for faculty involved in the preparation of individuals to work with young children and young children with disabilities
2) The inservice training will be framed by the standards for Early Childhood Special Education that have been developed collaboratively by the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These standards have been disseminated to the field via the DEC communicator. In addition, these standards have been adopted by NCATE, and will be incorporated into the accreditation process.
3) The inservice training will be incorporated into the activities of the Higher Education Consortium. It is anticipated the training will take place in 1996-97.

In June, representatives of the workgroup met at Jeckyll Island to continue plans. Invitations were sent to the Chairs of Special Education Departments at each of Georgia's institutions of Higher Education. Chairs were asked to extend an invitation to a member of their faculty who would, in turn, extend an invitation to a colleague in the early childhood department. The goal was to create an opportunity for faculty from the disciplines of early childhood and early childhood special education to engage in a dialogue focusing on emerging trends in the provision of services for young children with disabilities and their families, and implications of those trends for personnel preparation.

To date, outcomes accomplished include:

1) a needs assessment and teacher program survey has been developed and is ready for dissemination
2) endorsement courses were offered during the spring and summer
3) higher education surveys were completed and forwarded to the 619 coordinator
4) the workgroup continued to maintain contact

At the **Leadership Institute** in Vermont, collaboration with GLRS's and development of an ongoing system were identified as the final priorities for completion. New issues and ideas were also identified.

Current Needs to be Addressed

The need continues for an ongoing systematic mechanism for inservice training for preschool special education teachers and also for regular (Pre-K) preschool teachers serving young children with disabilities in their programs. Within the early childhood community, training systems exist for infants and toddlers, Head Start, and PreK providers. However, no coordinated system that assures training occurs appears to be in place for teachers of preschoolers with disabilities. Although the workgroup wholeheartedly supports inclusive training and would support a collaborative training system as a long range goal, the present needs of young children with disabilities are critical and must be addressed. Historically, the GLRS and Preschool Consortia have attempted to meet this need. Gaps currently exist in the statewide availability and teachers access to these efforts. The reexamination of the current efforts and their impact becomes the first priority of the workgroup.

Suggestions to meet this need include:

1) Dissemination of the needs assessment and teacher program survey

2) Development of training topics based upon the needs identified

3) Technical and monetary resources identified to support training activities

4) Development of a preschool consortium (similar to Severe Disabilities Consortium) to sustain efforts to improve quality of preschool services

5) Collaborate with GLRS's to establish a list of TA providers for identified topics

6) Continue workgroup activities with support from MPD and DOE

7) Pursue scheduling a Leadership Consortium (preferably in conjunction with another meeting) to address the common needs of training and TA system development for service providers for young children

8) Support the development of innovative pilot projects in collaboration with Higher Education

9) Update Preschool Policy Manual to reflect current recommended practices in response to changing service delivery models

10) Explore better utilization of DOE/ College/University Forum as mechanism for continued networking

Workgroup members present: Katherine McCormick, Julie Lee, Cynthia Vail, Juliann Woods Cripe

MAINE

Project activities conducted in Maine included the identification of a State Level Team Leader (the State 619 coordinator), dissemination of information and materials, and attempts to identify and involve members of a State Level Team in statewide assessment and/or collaborative planning activities to enhance preschool special education services and programs. Priorities in the State of Maine and issues requiring focus on important legislative activities were factors that resulted in the team leader's decision not to attend leadership and team development activities and not to continue to work with the Model Program Development Outreach Project. This decision was finalized in October of 1995 after frequent attempts at phone conferencing, communication by mail and meetings at regional and national conferences indicated that Maine was unable to focus their effort in this direction at this time.

Major activities and accomplishments:

1 The identification of the 619 coordinator, Jaci Holmes to serve as the state contact person and **team leader for MPD Outreach activities**. It was agreed that she would be responsible for identifying a team of individuals who were in positions that could facilitate statewide efforts to enhance the quality of early childhood services and programs in Maine. Project materials were disseminated and distributed, including **Best Practice Indicators for Early Childhood Special Education Programs: A self Assessment Tool for Program Development/Improvement**.

2 **A two day Leadership Training Institute for MPD state team leaders** from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Arizona was planned and held in Burlington Vermont in August 1995 to discuss Issues of Leadership and Collaboration and to articulate the focus of the MPD Outreach project in each state. The Institute was to be attended by Jaci Holmes from Maine, however, she had to cancel just prior to the Institute because of important legislative activities in Maine.

3 **A three day Leadership Training Institute for members of a State Level Team was planned and held in November 1995 in Sturbridge, MA in conjunction with the conference sponsored by NERRC and NEC*TAS** (in collaboration with The Technical Assistance for Parents Project, The Regional Lab for Educational Improvement, Resource Access Projects from the Region and state education agency personnel). The conference, "Working Together for Children and Families: Supporting Inclusive Communities" involved members of state level teams from throughout Region I and afforded an opportunity for each state team to work individually and collectively on state identified goals and objectives which could enhance the vision of inclusionary early childhood programs and services. MPD Outreach project staff involvement with Maine included

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efforts to facilitate identification of members of the Statewide team who could attend the conference. None were identified or able to attend.

Next Steps
There were no further MPD Outreach activities planned with Maine after November, 1995.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Project activities conducted in New Hampshire included the identification of a State Level Team, three Leadership Training Institutes for both MPD state team leaders and for members of the New Hampshire State Team, facilitation of state level planning, technical assistance and training. The Project has supported the formation of a team of early childhood leaders in New Hampshire and Project activities have been responsive to the work of the team in developing and planning for a shared vision for New Hampshire's children and families, which includes quality preschool special education programs and services. Please see the attached list of team members from New Hampshire. The state team developed the following rationale and their first version of their vision statement at their first three day meeting in Sturbridge, MA , November, 1995:

Rationale

We recognize that children and families are the future and strength of the state of New Hampshire. Because children are members of families and families are integral parts of communities, local communities should be encouraged and supported in their efforts to provide formal and informal resources for all families. The State of New Hampshire is currently planning changes in the system of supports for families and children, and we see this as an opportunity to enhance communication among state and local programs and to plan proactively to make effective and efficient use of available resources. This will require that state and local service providers and families work together in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration and develop a shared vision for strengthening all of New Hampshire's children and families.

The Vision (Revised 2/6/96 - See attachment for latest draft)

Every family in New Hampshire has the right to comprehensive, high quality supports, early care and education appropriate for their children. Every New Hampshire community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and their families. To enhance local community efforts, the State of New Hampshire will promote systems which maximize public and private initiatives that respect the diversity and uniqueness of persons, programs and communities.

Major activities and accomplishments:

1 The identification of the 619 coordinator, Ruth Littlefield to serve as the state contact person and **team leader for MPD Outreach activities**. It was agreed that she would be responsible for identifying a team of individuals who were in positions that could facilitate statewide efforts to enhance the quality of early childhood services and programs in New Hampshire.

2 **A two day Leadership Training Institute for MPD state team leaders** from New Hampshire, Vermont and Arizona was held in Burlington Vermont in August 1995 to discuss Issues of Leadership and Collaboration and to articulate the focus of the MPD Outreach project in each. The institute was attended by Ruth Littlefield and another representative of the state team. The outcomes of the meeting included:

- The identification of other persons who are important stakeholders or constituents in early childhood program planning in New Hampshire and development of a plan to seek their commitment to working as a State Level Team to enhance the quality of early childhood special education programs and services in the state.
- An agreement to have State Level Team members attend a three day Leadership Training Institute in conjunction with a meeting of teams from other Region 1 states (NY, NJ, MA, RI, MA, CN, VT, DE) planned by 619 coordinators of Region 1 and supported by NEC*TAS and NERRC. MPD Outreach staff agreed to participate in planning for the meeting to be held in November, 1995 in Sturbridge MA, and to act as facilitators for the New Hampshire State Level Team.
- A request for technical assistance in the development of a Quality Assurance evaluation and planning tool for a statewide early childhood program in New Hampshire, PTAN (The Preschool Technical Assistance Network) in collaboration with State Level Team members.
- A plan to explore training and other resources relevant to enhancing quality in early childhood services and programs identified as priorities by State Level Team members.

3 **A Three day Leadership Training Institute for members of the State Level Team was held in November 1995 in Sturbridge, MA in conjunction with the conference sponsored by NERRC and NEC*TAS** (in collaboration with The Technical Assistance for Parents Project, The Regional Lab for Educational Improvement, Resource Access Projects from the Region and state education agency personnel). The Conference, "Working Together for Children and Families: Supporting Inclusive Communities" involved members of state level teams from throughout Region I and afforded an opportunity for each state team to work individually and collectively on state identified goals and objectives which could enhance the vision of inclusionary early childhood programs and services. MPD Outreach project staff involvement with the New Hampshire State Level Team included:

- Finalizing New Hampshire State Level Team membership.
- Collaborative planning of conference agenda via travel to regional planning meetings and conference calls.

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- Pre-meeting conferencing with members of the New Hampshire State Team to clarify their goals for the meeting in Sturbridge by conference call and e-mail.

- Distributing resource and planning materials and **Best Practice Indicators for Early Childhood Special Education Programs: A self Assessment Tool for Program Development/Improvement.**

- Facilitating the work of the New Hampshire State Level Team for three days, which resulted in a collaboratively articulated rationale, vision statement and a plan of action for the State Level Team. Action Plan is attached.

- Presenting a concurrent conference session addressing: a) the intent and scope of the MPD Outreach Project; b) issues of collaboration and leadership in State Level Planning for quality early childhood special education programs; c) lenses of family centered, culturally sensitive, inclusionary and developmentally appropriate early childhood practices; and d) review of existing self assessment and planning tools and processes for enhancing quality of early childhood special education preschool programs.

- Preparing a written summary of outcomes of the meeting for State Level Team members, NEC*TAS, and NERRC.

- Maintaining ongoing contact with State Level Team members regarding input from other New Hampshire constituents in response to the Vision statement.

- Facilitating next steps as outlined in the State Level Team plan of action, e.g., arranging meeting sites and logistics, providing parent stipends, planning for meeting agenda items and providing and disseminating materials and resources related to the plan of action.

Through August 1996, Project staff continued to support the efforts of the New Hampshire State Team to move their broad vision for quality services for all New Hampshire's children and families and their goal for quality early childhood special education programs and services forward. Project staff responded to the needs of the New Hampshire State Level Team for technical assistance and training toward those ends. Specifically:

- Project staff worked with members of the State Team to **develop a quality assurance tool/ process to evaluate New Hampshire's Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN)** and review that plan with the Advisory Board for PTAN and the State Level Team.

- Project staff supported and facilitated bi-monthly meetings of the State Level Team as they **implement their action plan and consider a**

strategic planning process to identify long term goals and activities for the next several years.

- Project staff **financially supported the activities of parents as members of the State Level Team** who have no other funding for travel, meals, lodging, childcare and daily stipends.

- Project staff worked with State Level Team members to **develop regional training for early intervention and preschool special education service providers regarding transition issues**, and support local facilitators in the development of **regional plans of action to enhance child and family transitions from early intervention to preschool services and programs.**

- Project planned and delivered information on state level collaboration and leadership in early childhood programs and services at **a statewide conference, "We're All Together" in a day long session entitled, "Working Together for Children and Families: Teams Supporting Inclusive Communities" planned and presented with personnel from NEC*TAS and New Hampshire's Institute on Disabilities, Community Connections Program.**

- Project assisted in evaluating the activities and outcomes of state level team planning in New Hampshire through qualitatively (individual interviews) and quantitatively (team process surveys) in coordination with MPD Outreach evaluation strategies in other states and which reflected the cares, concerns and issues of New Hampshire team members.

- Based on feedback from key family and state agency personnel, the vision statement was changed to remove the term "right to," which many felt would lessen its chance of adoption by many people in New Hampshire, who do not want to see anything that can be interpreted as entitlement.

In August 1996, Project staff developed and hosted a two day Leadership Institute for teams from New Hampshire, Vermont, South Dakota, and Arizona in Burlington VT. Teams shared information on collaborative team building and processes, used goal attainment scale process to evaluate team accomplishments to date, and focused on current and future involvement of key constituent groups, i.e., children and families, higher education, state policy, and service providers. **The New Hampshire team met to address a specific new goal on their action plan, i.e., to develop strategies for information sharing**. Project staff provided for technical assistance from a Web page designer who discussed strategies and software with the team.

During the 1996-97 school year, Project staff continued to support team meetings in New Hampshire and their further articulation of team

goals. The New Hampshire team added new membership to address a current state priority for developing quality childcare systems and a parent network of support. The team decided that the role of the team was to enhance current efforts and activities, but not to take on new responsibilities in isolation. Work on the Web page continued, personnel to develop the Web page were identified and state agency support was acquired through the Department of Education. Trainings developed for Early Childhood Special Education Program staff were delivered by MPD staff in three locations in New Hampshire by MPD staff. The PTAN Quality Assurance survey was finalized and mailed to early childhood special education staff and families. The New Hampshire state team took steps to insure that the team responsibilities were shared, developing a plan to have different agencies host the meetings each year and provide technical support for minutes, announcements and meeting space. **The New Hampshire team identified training in Leadership and constituency building as a new priority.**

In August, 1997, New Hampshire state team members met with members of the Vermont state team at the Final Leadership Institute. They utilized their two days at the Institute to evaluate outcomes of the project, to update action plans and to receive leadership and constituency building training. New goals addressed through their action plan included building support for a development of a strategic plan for New Hampshire services for children and families - the Futures Search Conference, and follow up on previous actions. (See attachment for August, 1997 Action Plan for future directions of the team) The team participated in the Covey Institute Training, **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**, and invited key state constituents to the training with them.

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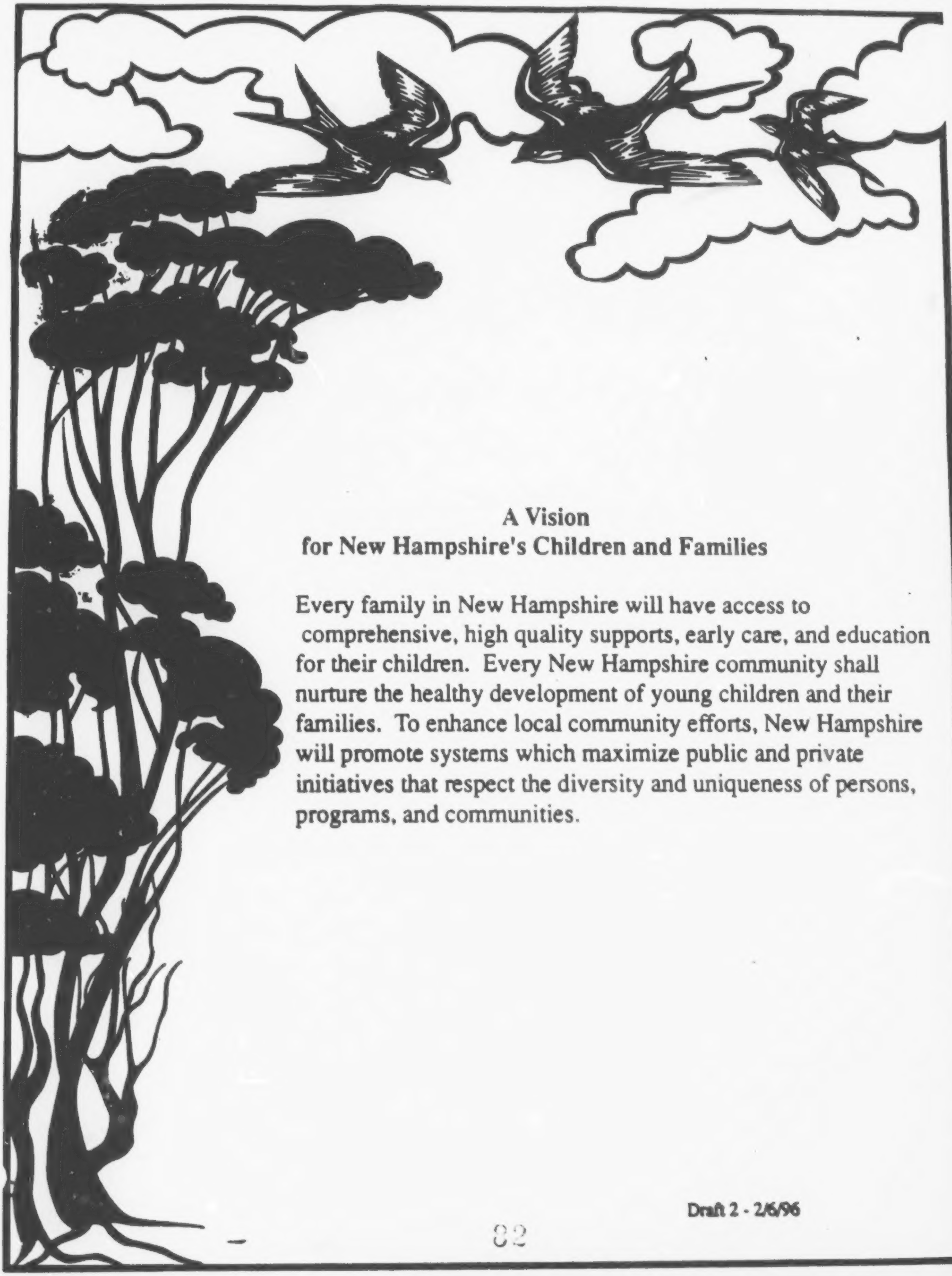

A Vision
for New Hampshire's Children and Families

Every family in New Hampshire will have access to comprehensive, high quality supports, early care, and education for their children. Every New Hampshire community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and their families. To enhance local community efforts, New Hampshire will promote systems which maximize public and private initiatives that respect the diversity and uniqueness of persons, programs, and communities.

Draft 2 - 2/6/96

ACTION PLAN

November 9, 1995

ACTION	BY WHOM	WHEN	COMPLETED/NOTES
Endorsement of Vision by key organizations and individuals.	Team Members (as per table in notes)	By February, 1996	Movers & Shakers in New Hampshire (families, individuals & groups).
Steps:			
1. Finalize script for presentation of Vision.	Team Members	November 18, 1995	
a. draft script	Ruth Dennis	November 10, 1995	Using notes from Sturbridge meeting.
b. fax script to team members or mail	Ruth	Nov. 10-13, 1995	To Fredda 11/10 via Fax.
c. feedback edits to Ruth and Jane	Team Members	November 18, 1995	May use e-mail or conference call if needed.
d. final draft	Ruth & Jane	November 20, 1995	Faxed/mailed to all.
2. Get endorsements/feedback from individuals/groups.	Team Members	February, 1996	As per contact table.
a. keep list of contacts comments/interest	Team Members	Ongoing ➔ Feb.	E-mail or call/mail to Ruth/Jane anytime.
b. send to Ruth and Jane	Team Members	By February, 1996	Summary of team member contacts.
c. compile update of contacts/feedback and send to team members	Ruth & Jane	By February 1, 1996	So team has it by February 6th.
3. Team Meeting	Team	February, 1996	
a. arrange logistics	Ruth Littlefield & Brenda	ASAP	Tuesday, February 6th - 9:30-12:00 with option for lunch as target.
b. review feedback	Team	February, 1996	Fish & game.
c. plan next steps	Team	February, 1996	Review notes from Sturbridge.

Introduction

A group of people from New Hampshire participated in a Northeastern States regional retreat to examine how we can work together with communities to support families and children. We drafted a vision and identified key people who could help make this vision a reality. You are important in the effort to make things better for children and families in New Hampshire. We know many people and groups share an interest in joining together to support our state's children and families, and we hope this vision can enable us to focus our efforts toward a common vision.

Rationale

We recognize that children and families are the future and strength of the state of New Hampshire. Because children are members of families and families are integral parts of communities, local communities should be encouraged and supported in their efforts to provide formal and informal resources for all families. The State of New Hampshire is currently planning changes in the system of supports for families and children, and we see this as an opportunity to enhance communication among state and local programs and to plan proactively to make effective and efficient use of available resources. This will require that state and local service providers and families work together in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration and develop a shared vision for strengthening all of New Hampshire's children and families.

The Vision

Every family in New Hampshire has the right to comprehensive, high quality supports, early care and education appropriate for their children. Every New Hampshire community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and their families. To enhance local community efforts, the State of New Hampshire will promote systems which maximize public and private initiatives that respect the diversity and uniqueness of persons, programs and communities.

What We are Asking of You

Can you endorse this statement as a guide for public and private services and programs for families and children in New Hampshire?

We realize that many programs and teams have vision statements of their own in place and that any vision requires that missions and goals of specific organizations and groups remain individualized. Is this statement consistent with your current vision, and yet broad enough to guide our collective and cooperative efforts to enhance resources for all children and families in New Hampshire?

Would you like to be kept informed of future activities or meetings of persons interested in moving this vision forward?

Currently Conceived Next Steps

In February, we will be meeting to review the response to this mission statement and to consider next steps in revising or adapting it to be more reflective of the feedback we have received. We would also like to begin looking at the ways existing programs support this mission statement and begin to strategically plan to move this vision forward in New Hampshire.

NH

ACTION PLAN

August 1997

ACTION	BY WHOM	WHEN	COMPLETED/NOTES
1) Support the convening of a Future Search Conference to develop a strategic plan for services to children and families.			
a) Write letters of support for Ann on agency/own letterhead.	present participants	by September 1st	
b) Send list of proposed attendees to Ann; gather addresses	present participants	by September 1st	
2) Check on Web site progress	1) Institute meet with Ruth	by September 1st	
3) Continue to explore collaborative funding of demo. projects	2) Discuss at next Sturbridge mtg.		

A History of the Relationship between South Dakota and the National MPD Project

Prepared for the August 1996 MPD Summer Institute

Following is a history to date of the relationship between South Dakota and the National Model for Program Development (MPD) Project operating out of the University Affiliated Program (UAP) of Vermont, University of Vermont. South Dakota primarily is collaborating with the UAP of Vermont through National TEEM Outreach, which focuses on enhancing transition planning for young children and their families from early childhood settings into kindergarten, but the resources of the National MPD Project are available in addition to address other issues/areas in early childhood program development/improvement that may arise in the process of focusing on the area of transition.

The primary emphasis of the National MPD Outreach Project is to support the efforts of a State Level Team of family members and interagency early childhood service representatives to enhance early childhood services and programs and focus on changes that affect children and families, service providers, personnel preparation programs/activities and state policy (See Attachment 1). With the State 619 Coordinator acting as state contact person, the MPD staff who work with your state will assist you in developing state level leadership strategies, such as generation of a shared vision for children and families, and strategic planning to move toward your state vision, including developing specific goals and actions to address those goals. MPD has resources that may be helpful to carry out specific actions, in the form of training, technical assistance or other kinds of support.

Reviewing a timeline of our contacts and activities in the past may be helpful to understand the involvement of South Dakota with the MPD project, keeping in mind South Dakota is committed primarily to collaborating with the Vermont UAP through National TEEM Outreach.

MPD Staff Involvement Prior to August 1, 1996

December 1994/January 1995

Our contact with South Dakota began when the National TEEM Outreach grant was written in December 1994/January 1995. Michelle Powers; South Dakota's Preschool Grant Coordinator, Phylis Graney, Project Coordinator of the Statewide Systems Change & Deaf-Blind Projects; and Mona Terwilliger of the University Affiliated Program of South Dakota wrote a letters of support for the grant. Michelle Powers subsequently became the contact person for the TEEM project and a member of the Core Team/Steering Committee formed through project activities. Phylis also became a member of the Core Team/Steering Committee and Mona a member of the Steering Committee.

September/October 1995

National TEEM Outreach was funded and preliminary communication through telephone and e-mail was established between Phylis Graney and Jane Ross-Allen, a project staff member to confirm South Dakota's continued interest in participating in the project. Phylis in turn communicated with Michelle Powers to discuss the project and recommend that she become the primary contact person for the grant.

November 1995

Michelle established initial contact with Jane Ross-Allen, indicating that she would be the primary contact person and a member of the Core Team for South Dakota along with Phylis Graney. Michelle subsequently recruited Dawn Sorenson to be the family representative on the Core Team.

National TEEM Outreach staff held discussions with other members of the UAP's early childhood team to determine if it might be feasible to combine the resources of National TEEM Outreach and those of the National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development (MPD) (please see Attachment 1). It was felt that there was potential to address other areas of early childhood program development that were directly related to quality transition planning, e.g., home-school partnerships, developmentally appropriate curriculum, screening practices, etc.. Jane Ross-Allen e-mailed Michelle to let her know that Ruth Dennis, working on the MPD project, also would collaborate with South Dakota and potentially offer additional/supporting resources to address some of the program development/improvement issues that naturally surface during the process of enhancing transition planning.

TEEM Manuals and other information materials about National TEEM Outreach were sent to Dawn, Michelle, and Phylis in preparation for their first Core Team meeting to be held December 19, 1995.

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December 1995

Jane Ross-Allen sent Core Team members Dawn, Michelle, and Phylis a letter further clarifying project staff ideas related to combining the resources of National TEEM Outreach and National MPD Outreach. Along with potentially offering additional resources to address programmatic issues, both the TEEM and MPD projects promote the development of a state level team to establish or revise a vision for quality early childhood services. It was felt that although the primary focus for South Dakota was transition, the potential availability of additional resources through National MPD Outreach could potentially strengthen and broaden the impact of South Dakota's and Vermont's collaborative efforts.

The South Dakota Core Team held its first planning meeting 12/19/95 and: 1) identified approximately 11 individuals from across the state to be members of the State Steering Committee to look at transition; 2) made a decision to convene the Steering Committee in February 1996 to develop a vision and action plan in collaboration with the Core Team (also members of the Steering Committee); and 3) determined that it would be valuable for project staff to attend the initial meeting of the Steering Committee in February.

January 1996

Michelle sent letters to individuals recruited for Steering Committee (please see Attachment 2) informing them of initial meeting scheduled for February 15, 1996.

February 1996

Ruth Dennis and Jane Ross-Allen attended Core Team meeting on February 14, 1996 and Steering Committee meeting on February 15, 1996. During the Core Team meeting, Dawn, Phylis and Michelle shared information about early childhood in South Dakota, completed a planning tool provided by Ruth and Jane which focused on transition efforts in the state and potential resources available to "tap" for training and dissemination, and reviewed agenda for 2/15/96 Steering Committee Meeting (please see Attachment 3). Jane shared information about National TEEM Outreach and Ruth briefly addressed the availability of additional resources through National MPD if appropriate and highlighted the Best Practices in Early Childhood Program Development Self-Assessment, which was included in the members' meeting packets. The Steering Committee worked extremely well in brainstorming ideas and issues related to transition planning and their hopes for enhancing transition. Based on all this work, the Steering Committee drafted a vision statement, goal/outcome areas, and an action plan. As part of the action plan, it was determined that the Core Team would meet in March, review the work of the Steering Committee, extract the elements of successful transition, and address issues, current best practices, training opportunities and needs, and resources and key players to promote successful transition planning. Michelle took the work of the day.

summarized it, and sent it out to Steering Committee Members (please see Attachment 4). It was decided at today's meeting that the Core Team's role would be to operationalize ideas and decisions (i.e., be the "worker bees") generated by the larger Steering Committee, with mechanisms for ongoing communication between the Steering Committee and Core Team to ensure Steering Committee input, ideas and consensus.

March 1996

Follow-up materials to the 2/15/96 meeting were sent by project staff to Steering Committee members, including the National Governor's Association booklet "Transition to School". Project staff sent Michelle copies of the videos "Recipe for Life", "Transition from Home to School", and "Parents and Teachers in Partnership" and some information on Vermont's Success by Six transition efforts. Also included was a revised list of Steering Committee members to reflect one member's inability to commit to the Steering Committee at this time (please see Attachment 5).

The Core Team met 3/6/96 and further delineated and summarized the work generated at the 2/15/96 Steering Committee meeting. Michelle sent a summary of this meeting and an activity plan to other members of the Steering Committee (please see Attachment 6). A follow-up conference call with the Steering Committee and Jane Ross-Allen was held 3/27/96 to review the summary and activity plan and make necessary modifications. Members of the Steering Committee ratified the activity plan and gave the Core Team the "go ahead" to operationalize the Activity Plan. Ruth and Jane sent Michelle materials they had gathered related to outcome areas in response to the Steering Committee's request, including the "Continuity in Early Childhood" document (Regional Labs, 1995); "Family/Professional Collaboration for children with Special Health Needs and Their Families" (Bishop, Owl, Woll, Arango, 1993); "Enhancing Quality: Standards and Indicators of Quality Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs" (New England Serve, 1989); and "Family-Centered Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs" (Assoc. for the Care of Children's Health, 1989).

During March, project staff from the UAP's National MPD project made a decision to hold a Summer Institute in Burlington, VT and invite members of teams from the primary states participating in MPD (Arizona, Georgia, New Hampshire, and Vermont) and from South Dakota's State Steering Committee to attend. Although the UAP's initial and primary collaboration with South Dakota is through National TEEM Outreach, it was felt that this would be a worthwhile opportunity for South Dakota to be involved with, since it would be an opportunity to hear what other states are pursuing and how they are addressing local issues.

April 1996

After communication among Michelle, Dawn, Phylis and Jane Ross-Allen regarding the Summer Institute in Vermont in August 1996, South Dakota made a commitment to attend the VT Summer Institute. Michelle sent out information to all Steering Committee members to determine availability and interest in attending.

Michelle sent out a letter to the Steering Committee updating them on progress related to the Activity Plan since the 3/27/96 conference call: 1) slots were secured at identified conferences - Office of Special Education Summer Institute, 7/10/96; Associated School Boards of South Dakota (ASBSD)/School Administrators of South Dakota (SASD)/South Dakota Education Association (SDEA) joint convention, 8/14/96 & 8/15/96) to promote awareness around quality transition planning; 2) Jane Ross-Allen committed to present at the above conferences; 3) symposium for preschool, kindergarten and first grade teachers was scheduled for August 13 in Pierre with Joanne Wounded Head from the SD UAP, Gera Jacobs from the University of SD, and Jane Ross-Allen collaborating on the presentation; and 4) Dawn Sorenson, Core Team member, began working on a one-page insert for the Parent Connection Newsletter to be mailed in July. The insert also will be placed in the SD UAP's next newsletter.

May 1996

South Dakota Team members attending MPD Summer Institute were identified: Jane Entwisle, Phylis Graney, Dawn Sorenson, and Mona Terwilliger.

Michelle drafted a brochure for August 13th Symposium. Michelle, Joanne, Gera and Jane held a conference call on 5/13/96 to discuss content and format of symposium.

Brochure was printed (please see Attachment 7) and sent out by Michelle to 87 schools within a 2-hour driving range of Pierre. Eleven of the 87 schools are federally funded Indian Schools.

Core Team met and continued work on family insert for newsletters.

July 1996

Michelle, Joanne, Gera and Jane held two conference calls to finalize content for August 13th symposium in Pierre. Jane Ross-Allen presented at South Dakota Summer Institute, Early Childhood Strand.

As you read this and all went as planned, symposium was held in Pierre August 13th and Jane Ross-Allen presented August 14th and 15th at the joint convention!

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July 26, 1996

August, 1996

Team members from the South Dakota Steering Committee attended the August 1996 MPD Leadership Institute in Burlington, VT. The team participated in Project assessment activities, including Goal Attainment Scaling and Constituent Group Impact Analysis, and shared strategies with other states for addressing and accomplishing their goals. The action plan they developed included continued work with Project TEEM for specific training and team support regarding their focus area of transitions. They identified no further MPD Project support needs.

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National TEEM Outreach

South Dakota State Team Meeting
February 15, 1996 - Pierre, SD

AGENDA
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

*Introductions/Overview of Day

*Setting the Context:

National TEEM Outreach & the State Team
The TEEM Model/Planning Process

*Expanding the Process:
National Replication of a Model for Program Development

*Leadership & Collaboration

LUNCH

*A Vision, Goals & Action Plan

BELIEF/VISION
TRANSITION IS GOOD FOR ALL CHILDREN

TO DO

CORE TEAM

Review work for today
Develop clouds as elements of successful transition
Address:
1. Issues
2. Current best practices
3. Training opportunities/needs
4. Resources/players

for each element

TEEM TEAM

Television meeting
Review work of core team
Feedback - fill in
More resource players
I.D. Next steps
Focus on awareness initially

CORE TEAM- scheduled to meet March 6th

TEEM- meeting location and times to be announced (tentative last week in March)

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SUMMARIZING ACTIVITIES:

Transition is good for all children
Transition can be specialized
Who you are trying to reach
School administrators of SD - umbrella group through specialized affiliates of organizations
Community planing/building strategies
Not a mandate
For all kids
Best practice
Information gathering from this group
Opportunities for less - conferences
I.D. Models
Presentation's with parents
I.D. Critical issues for parents
Parent connections
PTA
Parent organizations (Distinct in each community)
Opportunities for dissemination
ID Models
SDEA - Assoc. school boards - School Administrators
State HS conference
I.D. Models
Private schools - how to access
Tribal schools - how to access
Bureau schools - how to access
NIEA conference
SDIEA
Regional

GOAL/OUTCOME AREAS

NOTE: This represents the matrix generated at the meeting, with Transition being in the middle and all other topics generated out of transition. These are the elements the core team will be further defining in March and then bringing back to the steering committee.

TRANSITION (TEEM) PRESCHOOL - K

- Issues
- Current best practices
- Training opportunities
- Training needs
- Resources/Players

PROCEDURES

- Information regarding new criteria, ongoing training
- Training and TA manuals
- Best practices
- Meaningful
- State/Local levels
- Format

AWARENESS

- Parent stories - training
- Share information regarding inclusion to professionals
- Add to compliance proposal

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Family identified success
- Empowerment
- Parents as 1st teachers

MODELS

- Head Start transition projects
- Development
- Elements of best practice
- Showcasing
- Replicate
- Key people

- Identification

HEALTH ISSUES

- Caring program
- Headstart active here
- Information
- Dental
- School nurses

DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES

- Teachers - K 1st grade
- Influence state curriculum directory
- School administrators association agenda - mechanism - awareness of best practice
- Parental awareness

NETWORKING

- Conference
- Multimedia
- Need for involvement of health professionals
- Human/other resources - ICN models
- Language

South Dakota Project TEEM Outreach
ACTIVITY PLAN

Steps/Activities	Person Responsible	Timeline	Final Measure of Completion
1. Identify conferences and events that the presentations to raise awareness of transitioning preschool aged children will occur at.	Steering Committee	March 27,1996	
2. Identify the persons who will do the presentations at conferences and events.	Steering Committee	March 27, 1996	
3. Contact and secure the individual(s) who will do the presenatations	Core team- possibly Phylis Graney	By the end of April, 1996	
4. Plan a one day symposium for preschool, kindergarten, and 1st grade teachers on the topic of issues related to transitioning preschool aged children into regular education settings. Planning will include selecting a date, times, location, mailing announcements, registration, and securing the presenters.	Steering committe will make all decisions regarding presenters, date, location, etc. Steering committee will delegate planning activities to a small group of committee members to finalize all plans and carry them out.	March 27, 1996 Planning for symposium to be completed by the end of May,1996 in order to get announcements out to school disticts.	
5. Develop a one-page insert for Parent Connection newsletter to assist in raising parents awareness on the issues of transition.	Steering committee	By the end of May, 1996	

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SOUTH DAKOTA

ACTIVITIES/TASKS/STRATEGIES	Person(s) Responsible	Date Initiated	Projected Date of Completion	Date Completed
Convene Steering Committee for update and input on current and future activities.	S.D. Steering Team		Nov. 1, 1996	
Continue statewide awareness activities on transition issues.				
Utilize survey results to identify key issues in the transition process.				
Based on survey results, develop training opportunities on key transition issues.				
Assure state level leadership in TEEM project.				
Identify collaborative efforts with state CSPD activities.				
Initiate contact with local teams interested in implementing TEEM process.				
Publish and disseminate insert to targeted group.				
Develop and disseminate a survey for providers and families.				

Core team meeting summary
March 6,1996
Present- Dawn Sorenson, Phylis Graney, Michelle Powers

The core team met and utilized the matrix generated from the Feb. 15th meeting in Pierre. Working off of the meeting notes, the core team dealt primarily with the notes entitled, "Goal/Outcome Areas". The team spent time discussing the overall emphasis the steering committee decided upon the for the outreach project, and ways to address all the issues identified on the transition matrix.

The overall emphasis of the outreach project will be to raise awareness of the issues that surround transitioning children from preschool special education programs into regular education settings, such as kindergarten. South Dakota will be addressing the issue of awareness of transition issues through a variety of approaches.

Concentration will be giving to raising awareness through the following methods:
A speaker will be identified to speak on the issues related to transition at major educational conferences and events throughout the state, such as ASBSD, SASD, SDEA, SDAEYC, PTA etc. Sarah Mulligan-Gordon has been suggested as a possible speaker for this, and Phylis has agreed to approach her if the steering committee agrees to this suggestion. Other suggestions for possible speakers would be greatly appreciated. The core team felt it would be beneficial to have one individual doing all the presentations to promote consistency.

To raise awareness for parents, the core team is suggesting developing a one page insert that Parent Connection could insert into their newsletter. This insert would provide some basic information about the project and include a short response section. This would be a simple yes/no answer section, with space for comments that parents could tear off from the insert and mail (with pre printed postage guaranteed). This would give the steering committee a method of feedback from families about the transition process, while at the same time providing good suggestions and ideas for the parents. The returned section also could contain a space for an optional name and address, to which we would send a copy of a technical assistance manual "Welcoming schools as parents" at no cost for returning the sheet.

Another method to raise awareness about transitioning children is a one-day pilot symposium for preschool, kindergarten and first grade teachers. This symposium would be held in Pierre for invited school districts within a 2 hour driving range, around the middle of August, 1996. The objective of the pilot symposium would be to provide a vehicle for regular and special educators to attend a series of speakers all addressing issues related to transitioning children into regular education settings. Topics covered would include the role of the educator in working with families, developmentally appropriate practices and how curriculum development is affected, and best practices suggestions for transitioning. There would be a small registration fee to cover the cost of lunch and a small snack. During the lunch, the educators would be taken through discussion of issues and problem solving relative to transitioning children. It is thought that this could be a combined effort, including Project TEEM, Systems Change and other groups that will be sought out. Cost for this type of presentation should be fairly low, since a small registration fee would be charged.

In summary, the core team discussed that all the issues generated by the steering committee will need to be addressed in all presentations designed to raise the level of awareness. Information provided will cover the topics of parent involvement, models for transitioning, developmental approaches, and health concerns. In order to be as effective as possible, this plan reaches out to the persons involved in transitioning young children into regular education programs; the family, the administrator and the educator.

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National Replication of a Model for Early Childhood Special Education Program Development (MPD)

A History of the Collaboration between Vermont and the National MPD Project

The state of Vermont is in the unique position of having participated in the Model Demonstration and State Outreach Projects that were the precursors to the Model Program Development National Outreach Project.

Vermont has, for many years, had an Early Childhood Work Group (ECWG) whose work has been to introduce initiatives, implement change, monitor growth, and promote interagency collaboration in the delivery of early childhood services. MPD Project staff have been working with Kathy Andrews, Vermont 619 Coordinator, who put together a state level planning team including many who had a history with the ECWG. This has provided the VT MPD team with the advantage of continuity with work already underway, the strengthening of existing relationships, and a common understanding of the state's history. This team has grown into the "Steering Committee" for the larger ECWG.

I. Major Accomplishments May 25, 1995 - February 1, 1996

1. The identification of the **619 Coordinator**, Kathy Andrews, to serve as the state contact person and team leader for MPD Outreach activities.

2. The selection of a **State Level Planning Team** (from now on referred to as the Planning Team)which is representative of the various stakeholders in the Vermont early childhood network.

3. A two-day **Model Program Development Summer Leadership Institute** which provided participating states with the opportunity to engage in tentative exploration of their state's most pressing early childhood issues and to learn the basic principles of the MPD Project. These beginning discussions resulted in identification of possible areas of focus, ideas for additional team members, and plans to finalize Plans-of-Action at a NEC*TAS conference planned for November, 1995.

- The Institute was attended by:

  Kathy Andrews, Special Education Consultant
  Department of Education

  Beverly MacCarty, Director
  Family, Infant and Toddler Project of Vermont
  Department of Health

  Kim Keiser, Director
  Child Care Services Division
  Agency of Human Services

  K C Whitely, Director
  State Head Start Collaboration Project

- The identification of others who are critical to the crafting and implementation of the Vermont vision for enhancing the quality of early childhood special education programs.

- A plan to contact and seek the commitment of those persons identified.

- An agreement to have the entire Planning Team attend a three-day Leadership Training Conference planned by 619 Coordinators and supported by NEC*TAS and NERRC.

- Plans to continue meeting as a group with project staff as facilitators to consider specifics of next steps.

4. **Continued Leadership Training** for members of the Planning Team occurred at the November, 1995 NEC*TAS conference where Planning Team and MPD staff collaboration resulted in the following accomplishments:

   - A decision that, in order to improve quality of early childhood services, the most pressing need was increased collaboration and communication between agencies.

   - A decision that better collaboration and possibly co-location would increase ease of access to services for families and children, provide a central and comprehensive source of information, facilitate interagency communication, and promote more informed decision-making.

   - The drafting of a document (from now on referred to as The Agreement) which stated their beliefs and goals for this collaboration effort.

- A plan for future meetings to continue working with MPD project staff around these issues and to address next steps as outlined in their Plan-of-Action (e.g., continuing their discussion of what the new collaboration would entail, finalizing The Agreement to be disseminated to stakeholders for feedback, beginning to explore possible sites for co-location).

5. **Continuation of the work started** at the two leadership conferences through ongoing involvement with MPD.

   - Regular meetings of MPD staff and the Planning Team since the NEC*TAS conference.

   - Presentation of The Agreement to the Commissioner of the Agency of Human Services, the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Education's Family and Education Support Team, the Governor, and other significant state level players for input.

   - A meeting of the Planning Team with the larger Vermont ECWG in February, 1995 which was facilitated by project staff. Copies of The Agreement were sent in advance to all members of the work group and the meeting centered around getting reactions and comments. A decision was made to have state level stakeholders attend an official signing ceremony.

   - There have been two additional meetings to date to incorporate suggestions made by the ECWG into The Agreement.

II. Projected Next Steps (as of February 1, 1996)

Project staff will continue their work with the Planning Team throughout the process of finalizing and signing The Agreement at the state level and moving step-by-step toward its implementation and their goal of enhancing the quality of early childhood special education programs in Vermont. Specifically:

1. Project staff will **assist in distributing The Agreement** to additional program, community, and family level stakeholders for feedback around the implications and implementation at the local level and for further revisions.

2. Project staff will **help the Planning Team coordinate an official signing** of The Agreement at a ceremony at the Vermont State house on Early Childhood Day (April 9, 1996).

3. Project staff anticipate assisting with the **coordination of the data gathering and analysis** of feedback from the local level.

4. Project staff will **support/facilitate meetings of the Planning Team** which will focus on the implementation of the numerous aspects of the collaborative effort.

5. Project staff will **evaluate the activities and outcomes** of the Planning Team in Vermont through qualitative and quantitative means in coordination with MPD Outreach evaluation strategies in other states, and which reflect the cares, concerns and issues of Vermont's planning team.

III. Major Accomplishments February 1, 1996 - July 30, 1996

1. **Ongoing meetings** between MPD staff and the Planning Team focused on the completion of The Agreement and follow-up.

2. **Completion** of The Agreement.

3. Meetings between various members of the Planning Team and MPD staff and the Commissioner of the Agency of Human Services, the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Education's Family and Education Support Team, the Governor, and other significant state level players to get **final signatures**.

4. **Official signing ceremony** for The Agreement held at the State House and orchestrated to occur in conjunction with Vermont Early Childhood Day.

5. **Ongoing team meetings** with MPD staff to plan next steps for the agreement, specifically looking at ways in which to implement it at the early childhood program level.

    - The original Planning Team of 7 has grown to approximately 12 to include others who have shown an interest and those who have been appointed by the signatories to The Agreement to represent them.

    - The newer, larger team (including MPD staff) has become the Steering Committee for the Vermont ECWG so as to combine and coordinate efforts.

6. The **June semi-annual Early Childhood Work Group Meeting** was held at which next steps for The Agreement were discussed as well as suggestions for the purpose and operations of the new Steering Committee.
    - It was decided that the Steering Committee, because its membership includes a variety of people with authority to make budgetary decisions, will serve in an advisory capacity and will move forward and operationalize those initiatives the ECWG promotes.

IV. Projected Next Steps

Project staff will continue their work with the Steering Committee throughout the process of implementing the agreement and realizing their goal of enhancing the quality of early childhood special education programs in Vermont. Specifically:

1. An August, 1996 **Model Program Development Summer Leadership Institute** will be held in Burlington, Vermont with a team representing each of the participating states in attendance.
2. Project staff will **assist in planning the implementation of The Agreement at a chosen model site(s) to ensure** family, program, and community level involvement and benefit.
3. Project staff anticipate assisting with the **coordination of the data gathering and analysis** of feedback from the local level.
4. Project staff will **support/facilitate meetings of the Steering Committee** which will focus on the implementation of the numerous aspects of their collaborative efforts.
5. Project staff will **evaluate the activities and outcomes** of Steering Committee in Vermont through qualitative and quantitative means in coordination with MPD Outreach evaluation strategies in other states, and which reflect the cares, concerns and issues of Vermont team members.
6. Project staff will **continue their collaboration with** Karen Mikkelson of the **New England Regional Resource Center (NERRC)**.

V. Major Accomplishments August 1, 1996- December 31, 1996

1. A **Model Program Development Summer Leadership Institute** was held in Burlington, VT on August 15&16 1996. Teams from all the participating states attended.

   - The Vermont Team (Steering Committee) included:

     Kathy Andrews, Special Education Consultant
     Department of Education

     Beverly MacCarty, Director
     Family, Infant and Toddler Project
     Department of Health

     David Baker
     Planning Division

Agency of Human Services

Julie Cadwallader-Staub, Coordinator
Carnegie Starting Points Grant
Agency of Human Services

Jane DiFerdinando, Coordinator
Chittenden County Success by Six

Beverly Frank (Parent)

Kathleen Keating, Public Health Nursing Specialist
Early Childhood Health
Department of Health

Kim Keiser, Director
Child Care Services Division
Agency of Human Services

Cheryl Mitchell, Deputy Secretary
Agency of Human Services

Howdy Russell, Director
Parent Child Center

K C Whitely, Director
State Head Start Collaboration Project
Agency of Human Services

- The Steering Committee members in attendance decided what their main goals were and **created a Plan of Action** by reviewing The Agreement and prioritizing their goals. The following are the three tasks they decided to focus on in the coming year'

    a. The development and implementation of a unified process for common grant application, reporting and monitoring.

    b. The implementation of the Core Standards for Center-Based Programs developed by the Early Childhood Work Group with accompanying technical assistance, training and resources.

    c. The training of Agency of Human Services and Department of Education staff to implement the MAPs (The McGill Action Planning System) process. This tool will serve to implement a single, family-centered planning system statewide that integrates multiple services

2. Project staff have continued to support/facilitate **ongoing monthly Steering Committee meetings** centered on moving the three aspects of the Plan of Action forward.

3. The Steering Committee and project staff, to implement the Action Plan, have supported the Child Care Services Division to **issue an Invitation to Communities** which asks all Agency of Human Services districts to develop an integrated system of dispersing funds and delivering the child care services associated with child care training, resource and referral, eligibility, protective services, etc.

4. The Vermont Legislature has required of the Commissioner of the Department of Education and the Secretary of the Agency of Human Services to **submit a report/plan to the legislature** in January of 1997 on the integration of funding and administration of early childhood intervention and education services. In October and November of 1996 the Steering Committee, project staff and others crafted a report/plan, based on the elements of The Agreement.

5. In December, 1966 project staff and Karen Mikkelsen of New England Regional Resource Center (NERRC) supported and facilitated a meeting of a wide spectrum of those in the field of early childhood to come together and respond to a the draft report. The input from these stakeholders was then incorporated into the document and the **report was delivered to the Legislature in January, 1997.**

VI. Projected Next Steps

Project staff will continue their work with the Steering Committee throughout the process of implementing their Plan of Action. Specifically:

1. Project staff will **support/facilitate meetings of the Steering Committee** which will focus on the implementation of the numerous aspects of their collaborative efforts.

2. Project staff will **evaluate the activities and outcomes** of the Steering Committee in Vermont through qualitative and quantitative means in coordination with MPD Outreach evaluation strategies in other states, and which reflect the cares, concerns and issues of Vermont team members.

3. The Steering Committee and project staff will begin the process of supporting one community to **implement The Agreement** as fully as possible.

VT Plan of Action

Notes from the Early Childhood Workgroup
& Steering Committee
August 15 -16, 1996

The group agreed to focus on the idea of using the Early Childhood Service Agreement to implement change at the community level. To do this, concrete examples of Service Agreement components should be available or created at the community level: regional, community, neighborhood. Two primary targets were chosen for action:

1) To review the Service Agreement and collect those practices occurring at the local level which reflect Agreement components, and
2) To identify state level goals for implementing and supporting Service Agreement components which would impact significantly on the local communities.

After reviewing the Service Agreement, the following sections were identified as potential targets for shared change implementation:

Section B, #3- To make a commitment for expenses for facilities(weatherization, etc.) training and materials to adopt the Core Standards.

#6 - To utilize family centered confidentiality requirements in all agencies and services

#5 - To assist people with accreditation by working toward multiple sources of funding, e.g. a college course for a number of people.

Section C,#2 - To look at models for combining funding and replicate those.

#4 To combine funding, forms processes, etc. for EEI, PCCs and Success by Six programs. This item is related to eligibility issues and well as Section D, #6 - a single application form.

Section D,#3 - To insure a greater voice and opportunity for family choice, employ the MAPs process across all agencies and adopt it as the primary family planning documentation.

Section E, # 2 - To open up any training in communities to all constituency groups.

Section F,#1 - To pursue evaluation and continuous learning by implementing a process which would ask communities, " What do you wish you knew?" and then help them get the information.

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Section G, #3 - To share examples of good public relations efforts across and withing regions.

After discussing the above, participants ranked them in order of critical importance for implementation and the following results were noted:

Section B, #3 - 19, #6 and #5 - 0

Section C, #2 - 6, #4 - 28

Section D, #3 - 8

Section E, #2 - 3

Section F, #1 - 0

Section G, #3 - 2

Participants chose the top three and created the following plan for pursuing them as implementation goals:

[redacted]aken from Section C, #4)Kim is the lead.

* To create the necessary materials and capacity for a common grant application, data report, financial report, monitoring process, and narrative report.

* To create a process for the timely dissemination of these efforts.

Activities:

Kim, Julie, Cheryl assures that Starting Points, Resource Referral, Training, Child Care Eligibility are ready to go by 10/1/96

This goal will be shared with Jim, Ted, Dennis around Success-by-Six funding for eventual combinations for next year by 7/1/97

Create a time line with target dates for sequential implementation for all early childhood services (EEI, Part II, Headstart, PCCs, Reach Up, Healthy Babies, EEE, etc.)

Create (adopt) a comprehensive evaluation process for all delineating required outcomes.

Created an opportunity for local communities to be pro-active, to act as pilots should they wish.

Articulate in a common language, program standards and outcomes sought by funding sources.

[redacted]aken from Section B, #3) Susan Alumawari and K.C. are leads)

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*To implement the Core Standards.

*To provide technical assistance, training and resources for that purpose.

Activities:

Work with community loan services, vocational centers, weatherization programs etc. to develop a package for local programs to use (MPD will help with this)

Encourage the use of these funds as a priority for local resources in adopting the Core Standards

Develop a training package and identify opportunities for people to meet specific objectives in components of these Standards.

Develop resources to enable people to participate in improving themselves or programs to meet the standards, i.e. peer exchange, consultation, etc.

[redacted](taken from Section D, #3) Linda North and Cheryl have the lead.

* To provide family choice by employing the MAPs process statewide

Activities:

Involve state managers in MAPs as trainers of trainers (part of family service planning)

Provide MAPs training at the state and local levels to all involved with family services and support.

Develop resources and support for pilot sites for local level implementation (to include parents and trainers).

STATEWIDE

EARLY CHILDHOOD

SERVICE AGREEMENT

APRIL 9, 1996

VERMONT'S VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Every family in Vermont has the right to comprehensive, high quality child development services appropriate for their children. Every Vermont community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and strengthen families. To support communities, the State of Vermont will create a unified system of child development services which shares common standards for quality and respects the diversity and uniqueness of individuals and of programs.

VERMONT'S DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

(1) "Families, youth, and citizens are part of their community's planning, decision making, and evaluation."

(2) "Children thrive, are ready to enter school, and succeed."

(3) "Families and individuals are safe, have the resources needed to succeed, and are supported by their communities."

STATEWIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE AGREEMENT

PURPOSE

We, the undersigned persons responsible for statewide early childhood and early support programs in Vermont, agree to establish a formal relationship among the Agency of Human Services, Department of Education, the Early Childhood Workgroup, and participating statewide community-based networks that will ensure communication and consensus on the development of a unified system of early childhood services.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

(1) A representative from the Agency of Human Services (AHS) Departments of Health, Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Social Welfare, and Social and Rehabilitation Services, the AHS Secretary's Office, the Department of Education, participating statewide community-based networks, and parents will be appointed to serve as the designated early childhood steering committee. Appointees will represent their respective agency/constituency on the committee, and will be a conduit of information to ensure that policies and decisions necessary to the development of a unified early childhood service system are made in a thoughtful and expedient manner.

(2) This committee will serve in the following roles:

- (a) Steering/Coordinating Committee for the Early Childhood Workgroup
- (b) Early Childhood Committee of the State Team for Children and Families
- (c) Advisory Committee for "Success by Six"

(3) This Committee will perform the following functions:

- (a) Oversee the coordination and integration of early childhood resources and services
- (b) Ensure communication among the Early Childhood Workgroup, the Agency Human Services, the Department of Education, and participating statewide community-based networks

(c) Engage the full participation of parents and other community members in the deliberations and activities of the Early Childhood Workgroup

(d) Provide input into decisions about the allocation of "Success by Six" funds to community projects.

(4) This committee will meet and report to the Secretary of the Agency of Human Services and the Commissioner of Education at least quarterly.

SECTION A: RELATIONSHIP TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKGROUP

OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE A PROMINENT ADVISORY ROLE FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKGROUP IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF VERMONT'S SYSTEM OF EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

(1) We agree to use the Early Childhood Workgroup as an advisory council for planning about service integration, service improvement, and family centered practice.

(2) We will provide at least one representative from our program to serve on the Early Childhood Workgroup, and will encourage representation on each of the sub-committees.

(3) We will keep our fiscal agents, legal authorities, and supervisors informed about the work of the Early Childhood Workgroup.

(4) We will provide financial support, encouragement, and mentoring, for parents within our programs to participate in the Early Childhood Workgroup, sub-committees, and other planning and advisory groups.

SECTION B: OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY OF COMMUNICATION AND COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS OF EXPECTATIONS AND WAYS OF OPERATING AMONG OUR PROGRAMS.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) We will share updated information on a timely basis and in a variety of ways (e.g., through statewide newsletters, the Child and Family Connections, electronic mail, etc.).

(2) We will make referrals to and accept referrals from other programs; initiate contact with the referred family within one week working days; and, with parental permission, notify the referring program about action taken.

(3) We will adopt and implement the Vermont Core Standards and Self-Assessment Tool for Center-Based Early Childhood Programs as the basic standards for community early care and education programs that are supported with our funding; and we will target technical assistance and training resources to assist programs in meeting the Vermont Core Standards by the year 2000.

(4) We will work with members of the Early Childhood Workgroup Core Standards Committee to develop similar guidelines for home-based or group care in other settings.

(5) We will encourage programs to seek national accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Child Care Association, or the National Association for Family Day Care, or to meet Head Start Performance Standards. We will target technical assistance resources to programs pursuing accreditation as a standard of quality.

(6) We will develop common standards for sharing information and protecting privacy, using the Agency of Human Services Confidentiality Policy as a guide.

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SECTION C: RESOURCE INTEGRATION

OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN IN EVERY TOWN AND VILLAGE IN VERMONT HAVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) We will alert members of the Early Childhood Steering Committee to new sources of grant funds that we intend to distribute to local programs. To the extent permitted by statute or regulation, we will use the Steering Committee to help us determine these grant awards.

(2) To the extent permitted by statute, regulation, and capacity, we will permit and encourage our programs to combine funding in order to provide comprehensive services to children and their families.

(3) To the extent permitted by statute, regulation, and capacity, we will develop a more inclusive process to integrate into our program children who are not otherwise eligible.

(4) We will work cooperatively to develop a single grant application form, a single data reporting form, a single narrative report, a single monitoring process, and a single financial report for all of our programs; and we will develop a process for timely dissemination of this information.

(5) We will work cooperatively to apply for federal or foundation funding.

SECTION D: FAMILY CENTERED SERVICE

THE STRENGTHS, GOALS, HOPES, AND DREAMS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WILL GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COORDINATED SERVICES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) To the greatest extent possible, we will serve children in the setting(s) most comfortable for them and their families.

(2) We will provide specialized services in the setting(s) most comfortable for children and their families so that children do not have to be transported to other settings for specialized services.

(3) We will ensure that families have choices regarding their primary support person(s); the numbers of individuals visiting the home will be kept as small as possible, unless the family requests otherwise.

(4) We will maintain accurate records of services that families receive; they will be accessible to families.

(5) We will develop and adopt common procedures, including mediation, for conflict resolution.

(6) We will work cooperatively to develop a single program application form that families can use to request services from any program.

SECTION E: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WE ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING TOWARD IMPROVED QUALITY ACROSS ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) We will develop trainings that contribute to the overall progress of professional development of individuals working in the field of early care and education.

(2) We will make available to parents and providers from other programs any training offered by our program. We agree to set aside a reasonable number of spaces to ensure that this is possible.

(3) We will support the Early Childhood Workgroup Professional Preparation and Development Committee in coordinating the schedule, content, and publication of a schedule of training events.

(4) We support training and professional development as a means toward achieving reasonable and equitable salaries and benefits for all segments of the early childhood service system.

SECTION F: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

WE WILL COORDINATE OUR EFFORTS TO EVALUATE AND IMPROVE OUR SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

(1) We will encourage all of our early childhood programs to participate in a continuous learning and improvement process, including peer review. We will require this of any program receiving at least $20,000 of state or federal funds.

(2) We will encourage parents, providers, and community members to participate in a comprehensive process of continuous learning and improvement.

SECTION G: PUBLIC AWARENESS

WE WILL COORDINATE OUR EFFORTS ON PUBLIC AWARENESS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A CONSISTENT MESSAGE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS AND THE VALUE OF HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) We will promote public awareness through creative projects, such as the following activities: Month of the Young Child, Dolls Project, cooperative publication of materials, cooperative sponsorship of public service announcements, and How are the Children? Campaign.

(2) We will provide information as requested by the Early Childhood Workgroup Public Awareness Committee.

(3) We will share our own program materials with other programs through the development of a public awareness library.

SECTION H: TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT

(1) This agreement shall be in effect from April 9, 1996 to June 30, 1997.

(2) This agreement shall be reviewed and updated prior to its expiration.

(3) A conflict resolution and peer review process will be developed to encourage and support compliance with the terms of this agreement.

(4) Additional programs may be added to this service agreement with a written request to the Steering Committee.

(5) Any program may withdraw from the agreement by providing 30 days notice and a written request to the Steering Committee.

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POLICY MAKERS

Howard Dean, M.D.
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Secretary, Agency of Human Services

Sally Sugarman
Chair, State Board of Education

Douglas Walker
Interim Commissioner, Department of Education

Helen Taylor
Administration For Children, Youth, and Families

Jan Carney
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DRAFT

STATEWIDE

EARLY CHILDHOOD

3 YEAR AGREEMENT

July 1, 1997

VERMONT'S VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Every family in Vermont has the right to comprehensive, high quality child development services appropriate for their children. Every Vermont community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and strengthen families. To support communities, the State of Vermont will create a unified system of child development services which shares common standards for quality and respects the diversity and uniqueness of individuals and of programs.

VERMONT'S DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

(1) Families, youth, and citizens are part of their community's planning, decision-making, and evaluation

(2) Pregnant women and newborns thrive

(3) Infants and children thrive

(4) Children are ready for school

(5) Children succeed in school

(6) Children live in stable, supported families

(7) Youth choose healthy behaviors

(8) Youth successfully transition to adulthood

(9) Families and individuals live in safe and supportive communities

The following agreement supports these outcomes.

Items in italics are defined in the glossary.

STATEWIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE AGREEMENT

PURPOSE

We, the undersigned persons responsible for statewide *early childhood* and family support programs in Vermont, agree to establish a formal relationship among the Agency of Human Services, Department of Education, the Early Childhood Workgroup, and participating statewide community-based networks that will ensure communication and consensus on the development of a *unified system of early childhood services*. This agreement provides the philosophical framework guiding the strategic action plan.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS: STEERING COMMITTEE

(1) Membership:

Representatives from the Departments of Health, Developmental and Mental Health Services, Social Welfare, and Social and Rehabilitation Services, the AHS Secretary's Office, the Department of Education, participating statewide community-based networks, and parent groups will be appointed to serve as the designated *Early Childhood Steering Committee*. Appointees will represent their respective agency/constituency on the committee, and will be a conduit of information to ensure that policies and decisions necessary to the development of a unified early childhood service system are made in a thoughtful and expedient manner.

(2) Role:

(a) Steering Committee for the *Early Childhood Workgroup*

(b) Communication link to the State Team for Children and Families

(c) Advisory Committee for early childhood statewide programs

(3) Functions:

(a) Oversee the coordination and integration of early childhood resources and services

(b) Ensure communication among the Early Childhood Workgroup, the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Education, and participating statewide community-based networks and families, including quarterly meetings with Secretary of Human Services and Commissioner of Education.

(c) Engage the full participation of families and other community members in the deliberations and activities of the Early Childhood Workgroup

(d) Develop a three year action plan with annual review and amend as needed, at least on an annual basis

(e) Provide input into decisions about early childhood resources and community projects.

SECTION A: RELATIONSHIP TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKGROUP

OUR GOAL:

A PROMINENT ADVISORY ROLE FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKGROUP IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF VERMONT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Use the Early Childhood Workgroup as an advisory council for planning service integration, service improvement, and family centered practice.

(2) Provide at least one representative to serve on the Early Childhood Workgroup, and encourage representation on each of the subcommittees.

(3) Inform our fiscal agents, legal authorities, and supervisors about the work of the Early Childhood Workgroup.

(4) Provide financial support, encouragement and mentoring for parents within our programs to participate in the Early Childhood Workgroup, sub-committees, and other planning and advisory groups.

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SECTION B: OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

OUR GOAL:

CONSISTENCY OF COMMUNICATION AND COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS OF EXPECTATIONS AND WAYS OF OPERATING AMONG OUR PROGRAMS.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Share updated information on a timely basis and in a variety of ways (e.g., through statewide newsletters, the Child and Family Connections,* electronic mail, home pages, etc.).

(2) Make referrals to and accept referrals from other programs; initiate contact with the referred family within seven working days; and, with parental permission, notify the referring program about action taken.

(3) Acknowledge the Vermont Core Standards and Self Assessment Tool* for Center-Based/ and Home-Based Early Childhood Programs* as the basic standards for community early care and education programs that are supported with our funding. We will target technical assistance and training resources to assist programs in meeting the Vermont Core Standards by the year 2000.

(4) Encourage programs and practitioners to seek appropriate accreditation or certification from national certifying authorities as a standard of quality.

(5) Use the Agency of Human Services Confidentiality Policy* as a guide for protecting privacy and sharing information.

SECTION C: RESOURCE INTEGRATION

OUR GOAL:

ENSURE THAT CHILDREN IN EVERY CITY, TOWN AND VILLAGE IN VERMONT HAVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Alert members of the Early Childhood Steering Committee to new sources of grant funds that we intend to distribute to local programs. To the extent permitted by statute or regulations, we will use the Steering committee to help us determine these grant awards.

(2) Work cooperatively to apply for federal or foundation funding.

(3) Partner in supporting community based planning and funding.

(4) Permit and encourage our programs to combine funding in order to provide comprehensive services to children and their families to the extent permitted by statute, regulation, and capacity.

(5) Develop a more inclusive process to integrate into our program children who are not otherwise eligible to the extent permitted by statute, regulation, and capacity.

(6) Work cooperatively to develop a single grant application form, a single data reporting form, a single narrative report, a single monitoring process, and a single financial report for all of our programs; and develop a process for timely dissemination of this information.

(7) Move towards a *result based budgeting* process to determine funding, that takes into account evaluation of best practice.

SECTION D: FAMILY CENTERED SERVICE

OUR GOAL:

THE GOALS, HOPES, AND DREAMS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WILL GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COORDINATED SERVICES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Involve families in selecting the settings in which they will receive services.

(2) Encourage the provision of specialized services in the setting(s) most comfortable for children and their families so that children do not have to transition to other settings for specialized services.

(3) Ensure that families have choices regarding their primary support person(s); the numbers of individuals visiting the home will be kept as small as possible, unless the family requests otherwise.

(4) Maintain accurate records of services that families receive; these records will be accessible to families.

(5) Develop and adopt common procedures, including mediation, for conflict resolution.

(6) Work cooperatively to develop a single program application form that families can use to request services from any program.

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SECTION E: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OUR GOAL:

IMPROVE QUALITY ACROSS ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Develop, coordinate and publicize trainings that contribute to the overall progress of professional development of individuals working in the early childhood field.

(2) Make available to parents and providers from other programs any training offered by our program. We agree to set aside a reasonable number of spaces to ensure that this is possible.

(3) Support training and professional development as a means toward achieving reasonable and equitable salaries and benefits for all segments of the early childhood service system.

(4) Adopt the early childhood career lattice as a framework for professional development.

SECTION F: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

OUR GOAL:

COORDINATE EFFORTS TO EVALUATE AND IMPROVE OUR SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Require this of any grantee receiving at least $20,000 of state or federal funds.

(2) Encourage parents, providers, and community members to participate in a comprehensive process of continuous learning and improvement.

(3) Provide information related to outcomes for young children to be used in community profiles and school report cards so that citizens can understand.

(4) Develop and adopt a continuous learning and improvement process and specific tools (such as consumer satisfaction surveys, varieties of peer review, and outcomes and indicators).

(5) Provide technical assistance for providers.

(6) Expect our evaluations to address outcomes for individual children, families, programs, and systems.

SECTION G: PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION

OUR GOAL:

A CONSISTENT MESSAGE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS AND THE VALUE OF HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES AND RESOURCES.

We assure that our programs will do the following:

(1) Develop, adopt, and implement a public awareness and communication plan.

(2) Promote public awareness through creative projects, (such as the following activities: Month of the Young Child, Dolls Project, cooperative publication of materials, cooperative sponsorship of public service announcements, Stand for Children, How are the Children? Campaign, and Child Care Counts).

(3) Provide information as requested by the Early Childhood Workgroup Public Awareness Committee.

(4) Share our own program materials with other programs through the development of a public awareness library at the Parent Assistance Line 1-800-PARENTS.

SECTION H: TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT

(1) This agreement shall be in effect from July 1, 1997 to June 30, 2000.

(2) This agreement and the strategic action plan generated by the ECWG, shall be reviewed and amended as needed, at least on an annual basis.

(3) A conflict resolution and peer review process will be used to encourage and support compliance with the terms of this agreement.

(4) Additional programs may be added to this service agreement with a written request to the Steering Committee.

(5) Documents referenced in this agreement (such as the Core Standards) which are available from the Agency of Human Services Planning Division are indicated by an *.

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GLOSSARY:

Steering committee:	The officially appointed group responsible for implementing the terms of the Statewide Early Childhood Agreement.
Early Childhood Workgroup:	A group of individuals (parents, providers and program managers) who volunteer to meet annually to guide Vermont toward a unified system of early childhood services.
Home pages:	Starting Points at www. links to other related pages.
Early Childhood Ages:	Birth - 10 years
Result based budgeting:	Guiding resource allocation based on specified outcomes, performance standards and best practice.
Unified System of Early Childhood Services:	Comprehensive statewide capacity to support children and families (attached).

ADVISORY GROUP FOR: (list)

Success by Six

Head Start State Collaboration Grant

Starting Points Grant

ACTION PLAN TO BE COMPLETED BY EARLY CHILDHOOD WORK GROUP

- Public Relations Committee
- E-mail
- Communication schedule of training events
- Clarify differences between AHS and DOE Confidentiality policies
- How do we target/move toward equitable access
- Yearly review of funding sources to local communities
- Conflict resolution

PROGRAM AND PROJECT COORDINATORS

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